Studies in the doctrine of grace in British theology – James Denny to D.M. Baillie

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Abstract

Studies in the Doctrine of Grace in British Theology - James Denney to D.M. Baillie. B.D. Thesis 1973. B.G. Worrall (St. Johns)

The thesis aims to consider some aspects of British theology in the first half of the twentieth century through the thinking of five representative figures on the theme of grace. The first two chapters give a broad historical introduction (I) and an outline of theological thinking in Britain during the period (II).

James Denney (III) is chosen as a representative of an 'orthodox' Protestant approach. Arguing chiefly from the Pauline epistles he defends a 'substitutionary' view of atonement. In contrast Hastings Rashdall (IV) working largely from a historical survey and trying to present a moral view acceptable to modern man criticised 'substitutionary' thinking and advocated an 'Abelardian' or 'moral influence' view. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the two views so far considered. John Oman (V) criticises traditional ideas of grace as omnipotent power and advances the view of grace as 'fatherly persuasion' which is always available. This rests on his view of the relation between the Natural and the Supernatural. Oliver Quick (VI) is chosen for his more Catholic approach. He understands the work of Christ under the 'sacrificial' model and has a richer view of worship and sacraments. Underlying this is the idea of a sacramental universe. Finally, Donald Baillie (VII) is seen as a mediating figure. Here the stress is more on the experience of grace, and the use of the 'paradox of g race' as an approach to Christology is considered.

The conclusion (VIII) suggests that there have been two traditional approaches to the understanding of grace, the Protestant and the Catholic, but that a third has emerged which begins from creation rather than redemption. As far as British theology is concerned it is chiefly represented by Oman. It is widely influential but its influence is not always recognised.

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STUDIES IN THE DOCTRINE OF GRACE IN BRITISH THEOLOGY

JAMES DENNEY TO D.M. BAILLIE.

B.D. THESIS, 1973.

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Abbreviations

ET	The Expository Times
JTS	The Journal of Theological Studies
LQR	The London Quarterly Review
SJT	The Scottish Journal of Theology

PREFACE

This thesis is an attempt to look at some movements in British Theology in the first half of the present century by a study of five representative thinkers. The doctrine of grace is used as a linking theme both because of its central importance in Christian thought, and also because it is a subject to which British Theologians have always given a good deal of attention. However, the present study is intended to fall more in the realm of Historical Theology than that of Doctrine. Because the Theologians chosen are of such different traditions and theologiaal outlook no attempt has been made to adopt the same method of presentation for each of them or to make easy comparisons. Nevertheless I have tried to keep in mind the questions raised on p 16 and to make some general observations in the conclusion.

Parts of Chapter II are adapted from work already submitted in the introduction to my M.A. Thesis 'The Doctrine of Authority in the Theology of P.T. Forsyth' (1964). Occasional references to Forsyth throughout come from the same source.

I am grateful to Professor N.H.G. Robinson of St. Mary's College in the University of St. Andrews who arranged for me to see some of the unpublished work of his predecessor D.M. Baillie.

I. HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

It is a commonplace observation in histories of Christian doctrine that the early church never formulated an orthodox doctrine of the work of Christ. While Christianity was clearly based on beliefs about the person and work of Jesus no orthodox answer was given to such questions as: What difference did his incarnation, death and resurrection make to men and the world? Why was his work necessary? To whom was it directed? and, given that it had some important effect, how is that effect to be conveyed to men and women of later generations?

We read of long, complicated, and often heated debates, first about Jesus relationship to the Father leading to the councils of Nicaea (325) and Constantinople (381), and then about the relationship of Godhead and Manhood in his person leading to the definition of the Council of Chalcedon (451). The deliberations of these councils did not at once lead to an end of the debates concerned, but increasingly their conclusions came to be accepted as normative, marking the boundaries within which Christian thought on these topics should move. As a result the so-called Catholic creeds, accepted, at least in theory, by orthodox Christians, and used by many of them in worship, include assertions on Jesus' Godhead and person. Yet strangely, apart from one phrase 'for us men and for our salvation', the great creeds of Christendom are silent about Jesus' work. One could get the impression that the questions with which we began, questions about the very purpose of it all and about the difference which he made to the human situation and man's relation to God were never raised. Indeed it is sometimes asserted that they were not.

This is an over simplification, but certainly these questions were not debated in the early centuries with the same vigour as the other questions we have noted. They were not then the great storm centres of theological controversy they became in later periods of the church's history. It is reasonable that we should ask why this was so.

Paradoxically it seems likely that the relative paucity of argument among the fathers regarding Christ's work is due not to lack of interest in it but to certainty about it, and to the relative wealth of material relating to it in the New Testament. The Bishops at Nicaea seem to have been rather suspicious of the word 'homoousion', partly because of its meaning in current and earlier Greek usage, but more particularly because it was not a Biblical word. They would have preferred a Biblical word for a Biblical idea, but could not find one. Similarly, the protagonists in the debates leading to Chalcedon were careful to buttress their arguments by reference to scripture. But the fact that the same passages could be claimed for different schools of thought suggest that the question of the relation of Godhead and manhood in Christ is not to be settled by a simple appeal to scripture.

The situation seems quite different when we turn to the question of the work of Christ. Not only was it definitely dealt with by the New Testament writers, it was the great fact which had brought both the church and the New Testament itself into existence. We have an almost embarrassing number of references. Indeed, for later ages the number of references and the variety of metaphors used became a problem in constructing 'theories of the atonement'. But the fathers seem largely content to accept and repeat the Biblical phrases, sometimes embellishing the metaphors but not doubting the underlying fact.

The basic unarguable fact about the whole work of Christ was, as the creed was later to say, that it was 'for us men and for our salvation'. Paul defines his Gospel briefly as "the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes" (Rom 1:16). It is an activity of God by which men are saved. The basic idea is eschatological. From referring to deliverance in purely human terms, that is from an enemy or an illness, the idea of salvation among the Jews had become by New Testament times particularly associated with God's final judgement of the world. In this sense it was a future hope for pious Israelites.

Against this background the first Christians spoke of the

Gospel as a message, or an active power, of salvation. The judgement, the last days in which God's purpose for the world was to be revealed, had somehow already come (Acts 2:16, Heb 1:1-4). They realised, of course, that the world as it had always been was still going on. This they explained as an overlap of this present age by the age to come (1 Cor 10:11), or as the parallel existence of this world and another (John 18:36). The period of overlap would last until Christ returned in glory. Meanwhile, to receive salvation was to be transferred by God from one age, or world, to the other, while apparently still living in the first. Hence the apparent contradiction, or confusion, about the time of salvation. Christians are in some sense already saved (Rom 8:24, 11 Tim 1:9); they are in the process of being saved (1 Cor 15:2, Phil 2:12); yet their salvation is still a future hope (Rom 13:11, 1 Pet 1:5). C.K. Barrett explains it thus, "Salvation itself lies in the future ... and means man's eventual safe passage through human trials and divine judgement to eternal bliss. In particular salvation means being saved from the wrath of God ... (but for Christians) ... The salvation ready to be revealed at the last time, though it could be complete only at the return of the Messiah in glory, was already, in virtue of his death and resurrection, anticipated in the present." (Romans p 27f).

Salvation, of course, is not the only word used in the New Testament to describe the work of Christ. It is also asserted that men are 'justified' or declared righteous at law (Rom 5:1); they are reconciled to God (11 Cor 5:18); they are forgiven, or granted remission of sins (Acts 10:43); and they are redeemed or ransomed (Gal 3:13). Furthermore the actual death of Christ is referred to as a sacrifice (Rom 3:24); and his blood is compared to that of the cleansing and covenant renewing sacrifices of Israel (Heb 9:14f). All these metaphors are used to express the work of Christ, or rather God's activity in him on man's behalf. They seem to be summed up in one all-inclusive phrase covering all aspects of salvation, the expression 'the grace of God'.

The Greek word 'charis' originally means beauty or charm, flowing into the English sense of graciousness of manner or appearance. In a secondary sense it has the meaning of a 'favour' or 'kindness'

shown by one person to another, particularly when shown by a superior to an inferior when there is no natural tie between them and the one bestowing the favour can expect no commensurate return. This secondary meaning gives the basic New Testament understanding. It is taken over from the Septuagint where 'charis' is used to translate the hebrew 'chen', and the Old Testament phrase 'to find favour' - 'masa chen' - is rendered 'eurein charin'. [1]

Just as Yahweh had shown favour to Israel in choosing them for no merit of their own and redirecting them by his active love, so the early Christians felt that he had been active in their lives, choosing and redirecting them. What the complex of events surrounding the Exodus and Covenant had been for the Old Israel, Jesus, and particularly his cross and resurrection, was for the New Israel. In both cases we see undeserved favour from a superior, expressed in action and leading to a covenant relation.

The classic New Testament example of this relationship is found in the case of Paul, and it is in his writings that the word and idea is most frequently found. Paul probably began his own thinking from his experience on the Damascus Road. Here, entirely without regard to his own deserving, God had taken hold of him and redirected his life. This involved the forgiveness of his past persecuting zeal, and a complete remoulding of his future plans and attitude. (1 Cor 15:10, Gal 1:15f). Whereas he had previously found the centre and purpose of his life in the Law and devout Judaism, he came to a new valuation in which these things were replaced by the knowledge of God in Christ (Phil 3:4-11). All this was based, he believed, on a personal encounter with the crucified and risen Christ in whom God acted in dealing with the sins of the world and calling men to himself (Rom 3:24, 11 Cor 5:18ff).

But Paul does not believe that he is unique. All Christians, he implies, have known a similar experience. They have known an

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1. It would be beyond the scope of this study to trace the idea back to conceptions of 'mana' found in primitive religions.

encounter with God in which he took the initiative and acted upon them, changing their lives by cancelling the past and setting them on a new way. Their experience did not come with a blinding flash of light. It came through the preaching of the 'Word of the Cross'. (1 Thess 1:9, Gal 3:1, 1 Cor 1:18-31, 2:1-5). In their response to the preaching the act of God in Christ comes home to them.

The case is not significantly different, though expressed in different ways, elsewhere in the New Testament. The Synoptics present Jesus as the one who, in his own person, brings the Kingdom or power of God; he releases men from physical and spiritual bondage (Mk 2:1-10); breaks the power of Satan (Mk 3:21-30); calls for sacrificial loyalty to himself, involving a new direction of life (Mk 10:17-22); and finally his work reaches its divinely appointed conclusion, or is summed up, in his death by which he establishes a new covenant to replace the old, or rather lift it to a new and fuller meaning (Mk 14:22-25). In John too we are presented with an act of God in Christ by which the unmerited favour of God is shown for man's good, or, paradoxically, his judgement (John 3:16ff). Those who respond are, by that fact, transferred to another sphere or mode of existence (John 8:12; 11:25), which they could not have attained alone.

New Testament ideas of grace seem to come to a head in Ephesians 2:1-10. It has been argued, largely from this epistle, that Paul understands grace chiefly as the extension of the covenant privileges of Israel to the Gentiles.[1] No doubt this is a strand of his thought, but here we see not only the breaking down of barriers, but the setting of the entire covenant relationship on a new foundation in the work of Christ. When he writes "<u>we</u> were dead" and "God quickened <u>us</u>", he is not merely using a preacher's technique in including himself with his hearers, or readers, he is stating what is in fact the case. In this passage we see most clearly that grace is God's favour personally active in Christ. We see also that it is the more remarkable in that, though men's sins may have deserved a very different treatment, God has acted from sheer mercy and love on their behalf, bestowing a gift they could not earn and for which they can

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1. cf J. Armitage Robinson: <u>Ephesians</u> pp 221-228.

take no credit for themselves. We need not ask here whether this passage is Pauline. Certainly it does not mention all the specifically Pauline emphases, but in the sense of wonder that suffuses it, it seems correctly to reflect the apostle's basic understanding of grace and his thankful confidence in the work of God in Christ.

But the New Testament contains other ideas of grace which seem to flow from this basic one of God's redemptive activity. The favour of God confers a status and seems to flow over into a power which keeps men in that status. It is probably in this sense that the word is to be understood in the salutations with which Paul begins his letters. The readers had already experienced the initial transforming encounter with God in Christ. Therefore, unless these greetings are to be understood as a regression to normal pagan Greek usage, we must reckon with a weakening of the word's normal Christian meaning, or at least a lessening of the stress on immediate experience.

Similarly the gift of grace can easily become 'gifts' or 'graces'. Paul refers to his apostleship as a 'charin' (Rom 15:15); the willingness of Macedonian Christians to give to the collection is likewise the 'charin' apparently given by God for that purpose; and individual talents are 'graces according to grace' - 'charismata kata charin' (Rom 12:6). Later the gift of ordination is referred to as a 'charismatos' (1 Tim 4:14).

The last usage mentioned seems to have moved some way from the main use we have noticed. There seems to be something of a drop in temperature, a lessening of the immediacy of the experience of God's personal initiative in Christ, though the idea of dependence on God for what man could not expect or achieve alone is still present. This is referred to by some as a move towards a more 'catholic' position, and the development of this position in the early church, and indeed much later, is often considered to be a decline from a purer New Testament position. It may well be that it is a decline, but its beginning in the New Testament itself should be noted.

To return to the questions from which we began it may well be that this wealth of Biblical material explains the relative lack of debate on this subject in the early church. It was natural too that the mind of the early church should be given to matters which seemed to raise the greatest problems for thinkers of the day. Thus there is a tendency to concentrate on the one-ness and unity of God, and the historicity of Jesus.[1] The work of Christ and its benefits would not therefore rise very early for debate. But it does not follow that these subjects were absent from the innermost thoughts of the fathers. They appear in the liturgy and are frequently touched upon in sermonic contexts, though there it was considered sufficient merely to repeat the Biblical language. It could be that the thought of the church simply lagged behind its experience.

However, when all allowances of this sort have been made, there is a noticeable change of mood when passing from the New Testament to the immediately sub-apostolic writers. The joy of forgiveness, the sense of immediacy and intensely personal response to the initiative of God in Christ which we found in Paul has diminished. In place of thankfulness for the unmerited action of God we find a heavy emphasis on man's need to repent and make himself worthy of the forgiveness offered; or, later, on the necessity for correct belief to win salvation. It is the power of Christ's example which is set before men as a spur, rather than the effectiveness of his work as a cause of thankfulness. Instead of being part of man's response to God repentance and belief are presented as themselves the means of earning salvation.

Illustrations of this mood can be found in 1 Clement, the pseudonymous homily 11 Clement, and, most easily, in the letters of Ignatius, as well as in other writings of the period such as the epistle of Barnabas and the epistle to Diognetus.[2] Basic to this sort of thinking is what might be called a 'light' doctrine of sin.

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1. cf J.N.D. Kelly: Early Christian Creeds ch 3. esp pp 66-70.
2. cf 1 Clement. 7. Library of Christian Classics Vol 1 p 47; 11 Clement. 3,4. ibid p 194; Ignatius, To the Romans, 3:2, 4:1. ibid p 104.

Man's state is not so serious as to need external Divine intervention. There is no sense of radical estrangement or rebellion. Sin is rather lack of knowledge, or at worst occasional disobedience. Man needs to be told what to do, and, by obedience, can put himself right with God.

Of course the ethical approach is not an ignoble one. It could be presented as deliverance from an anxious and meaningless life. The picture of Jesus as the great example is certainly one line of thought in the New Testament, and when he is seen as the pattern given by God some element of divine initiative remains. Later the concept of example merges into the idea of illumination, often associated with the gift of immortality, but by then the earlier man-centred moralism tends to be reduced to one strand, and that not the most important, in redemption thinking. J.N.D. Kelly sums up this approach, "It must be admitted that, as compared with the New Testament, the Apostolic Fathers as a whole are not greatly pre-occupied with sin, and that their writings exhibit a marked weakening of the atonement idea. Although satisfied that Christ died for us ... they assign a relatively minor place to the atoning value of His death. What looms much larger in their imagination is the picture of Christ as the lawgiver, the bestower of knowledge, immortality and fellowship with God." (Early Christian Doctrines p 165).[1] One is left with the feeling that the death of Christ was rather a drastic cure for a minor ailment.

The first major Patristic writer to give anything like a systematic treatment of atonement was Irenaeus. Against gnosticism and its contempt for creation he sought to establish the unity of God; the uniqueness and effectiveness of the redemptive work of Jesus; and God's concern for creation, which leads to his relating redemption to all creation.

His thought on redemption includes the need for teaching or illumination. He also has adumbrations of what might be called a theory of redemption by deification - 'He became man in order that we might become as God'. But he is chiefly known as a representative

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1. For similar comments cf H.R. Mackintosh: The Christian Experience of Forgiveness p 113; R.S. Paul : The Atonement and the Sacraments p 36f.

of what has come to be called the 'Classic' or 'Dramatic' theory; that Christ won a victory over hostile forces on man's behalf, into which men may enter. In setting out his argument he has two intertwined themes which may loosely be described as recapitulation and dualist exchange.

The theme of recapitulation can be understood at two levels. At its simplest it presents a contrast between Adam and Jesus in which Jesus is seen going over the whole course of Adam's history and putting it right by making the right decisions where Adam made the wrong ones.[1] The advantage of such a theory, setting aside the mythological overtones, is that the whole life of Christ is involved in his redemptive work. At every point he meets the enemies hostile to men and overcomes them. In this sense, though the theory is most fully worked out in Irenaeus, such ideas are found in other fathers.[2]

But at a deeper level this idea can be seen not only as a repetition of Adam's story, but as a summing up of the purposes of God for man and the whole of creation. Creation and redemption are drawn together as Jesus embodies in himself the course of human history purposed by God from the beginning. This introduces two important ideas. First that God acts in a way that is 'fitting'; as man's plight came from an individual choosing wrongly it is apt that his redemption should come from an individual choosing rightly. Secondly there is here the very important idea of the solidarity of the race; as men were 'solid with Adam', so they may be 'solid with Christ'.

The idea of dualist exchange also proceeds on the basis of what is 'fitting' for God. Redemption is rescue from Satan's power. Satan has no real claim on men, he has usurped authority from God, yet it would not be 'fitting' for God to dispossess him by violence. Even in dealing with Satan God must be shown to be just. Thus we have the idea of Christ's self-donation for the redemption of men.

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1. cf Library of Christian Classics Vol 1 p 389f.
2. cf H.E.W. Turner: The Patristic Doctrine of Redemption pp 49-53.

This idea of payment is variously interpreted. Is it payment to the Devil, or picturesque language indicating the cost to Christ? Many scholars wish to resist the idea of payment to the Devil.[1] But some idea of a price paid is certainly a reasonable understanding of Irenaeus' words, "Redeeming us by his blood in accordance with his reasonable nature, he gave himself a ransom for those who had been led into captivity." (Adversus Haereses 5:1. LCC Vol 1 p 385). Though this is not the most prominent idea in Irenaeus treatment of the subject, the germ of later elaborations is certainly present.

On this theory, the benefits of Christ's work should flow to all men regardless of their attitude, just as the disadvantages of Adam's disobedience had done. Such unilateral action by God, by which men are saved almost in spite of themselves, is not an easy idea, but it may be there is a deep truth here, that the human situation and 'the way things are generally' are different since the work of Christ. We shall return to such ideas. Elsewhere, and more characteristically, Irenaeus suggests men appropriate salvation through the sacraments.[2]

The idea of human solidarity, that the race is in some profound sense one entity, lends itself to what could be called a doctrine of deification either physically or mystically. That which is done in humanity at one point holds good for the whole race. Such thinking sees the result of Adam's disobedience as loss of immortality and the passing of corruption to the race. Man's need is then more restoration and recovery from corruption than rescue from peril or punishment.

Perhaps the best exponent of this type of thought was Athanasius. He can also describe man as under the control of a rebel - Satan - whose rebellion will be put down by the mere appearance of the true king.[3] Usually however he sees sin as corruption. This corruption

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1. cf E.R. Hardy: Library of Christian Classics Vol 1 p 351. Less dogmatically, H.E.W. Turner: op cit p 54.
2. Adv Haer 5:1 Library of Christian Classics Vol 1 p 388.
3. de Inc 55 Library of Christian Classics Vol 111 p 109.

leads to death. The Logos, having taken humanity in the person of Jesus, suffers the common lot of man. But the indwelling Logos and the obedient life lived make the death of this one body equivalent to the death of all humanity (a hint of a price paid), and since the Logos is by nature incorruptible the resurrection naturally follows. Such is the realistic connection between the humanity assumed by the Logos and all other humanity that the incorruption and victory over death present there overflow to the rest of the race. Athanasius illustrated this by a parable. When a king visits a city, though he only lives in one house, the entire city is honoured.[1] Gregory of Nyssa has a similar idea when he speaks of the Logos taking humanity from 'the lump of our humanity'.[2]

There is in Athanasius a suggestion that death (or Satan) had over-reached itself in taking Jesus, an idea based on 1 Cor 2:8. This led to a good deal of elaboration leading to the notorious analogy of Gregory of Nyssa where the humanity of Jesus is seen as the bait on the hook of his divinity.[3] For this type of thinking the benefits of Christ's work are passed on to men through the sacraments.

So far we have considered only the Eastern Greek fathers. In the West the predominant mood was legalistic, and Western thought was simpler, more objective, and has, on the whole, been more influential in English Religious thought.

The two important names are Tertullian and Augustine. Tertullian's great concern was for the moral life of the church. He accepted that each offence deserved an appropriate punishment, and applied this way of thinking to relations between God and man, teaching that good deeds earned merit in the sight of God and that evil ones needed satisfaction. Thus the important terms, 'merit' and 'satisfaction' were introduced into Western theology.

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1. de Inc 9 Library of Christian Classics Vol 111 p 63
2. Address on Religious Instruction 33 Library of Christian Classics Vol 111 p 310
3. ibid 24 p 301. For a sympathetic modern discussion of this analogy cf F.W. Dillistone: The Christian Understanding of Atonement p 97f.

Perhaps more importantly Tertullian introduced the idea of grace as a quasi-physical energy injected into the believer by sacraments. Baptism conveys forgiveness for original sin and sin before baptism, for later sins satisfaction must be made. In a strictly legal sense to make satisfaction is the same as to bear punishment, but Tertullian did not see it in this sense. The satisfactions of almsgiving, prayer, fasting, etc. were grounds on which God might annul the punishment due, but were not themselves the punishment. Interestingly he does not seem to have used the term satisfaction in speaking of the relation of Christ's death to sin. Yet he prepared the way for others to do so.

Later Western fathers used Tertullian's terminology and developed more clearly the idea of substitution. Sacrificial language is used, and sacrifice is understood as penal satisfaction or substitution. Jesus is seen as a sacrificial victim dying to meet the demands of divine justice. Language used in the East for the 'Classic' view is here used in a penal way.

Finally the greatest of the Western fathers, Augustine, though he has other views as well, sees the death of Christ chiefly as vicarious and substitutionary. Like Tertullian too he sees grace as a divinely infused energy, infused through the sacraments, by which man performs good works. Together with his tremendous stress on the free pardon of God through Christ, and an insistence that all good works come from God's grace, he wants to find a place for merit. The argument becomes circular, "In the end it is not the sinner, joined by faith to the saviour and reconciled to God, who is acquitted at the judgement-seat; it is the saint who appears clothed in his own merits, the love and good works which he owes to God's inspiring grace." (C.N. Moody, cited by H.R. Mackintosh, op cit p 118). This complex of thinking dominated Western theology until the Reformation.

Following Augustine the next really outstanding contribution to the subject was Anselm's 'Cur Deus Homo'. As the idea of payment or punishment, (the two were not clearly distinguished,) had become accepted orthodoxy, the chief problem was on the propriety of God making any payment to Satan. Anselm set aside any question of

payment to Satan, seeing man's relation solely towards God, and replaced the idea of punishment by that of satisfaction.

The background is feudal society. The serf who does not pay his dues to his lord has broken his contract and insulted the lord's dignity. Either he must make satisfaction by paying what is due, plus a little extra to cover the insult, or he must be punished. If he is punished, probably by death, the lord would still not get his due or satisfaction for his offended honour. Hence satisfaction and punishment are mutually exclusive.

Transferring this to man's relation to God, sin is both a withholding of the obedience due and a slight on God's honour. Should any sinful man henceforth live a perfect life this would only be what was due in the present, it would not make reparation for past sins or offended honour. Now, it is a basic premise for Anselm that sin without satisfaction must be punished, it would not be 'fitting' for God simply to forgive.[1] But it is also a fundamental axiom that man was made for blessedness, and God's purpose would have failed if he did not achieve it.[2] It was in order that God should escape from this dilemma - to put it crudely - that Jesus became man.

In Christ God himself provided the full satisfaction. His perfect life was what he as man owed, but his death was more than God demanded since God does not ask for the death of a perfect man. Furthermore, as Son of God his death was of infinite worth. It followed that God owed him something, since an infinitely good life merits an infinite reward. Christ, as God, lacked nothing, hence his reward was made available to the rest of mankind as an infinite satisfaction to be offered to God.

The external and artificial nature of this scheme is easily criticised. But it does take sin seriously and omits the idea of payment to Satan. It was basically this scheme which, codified by Aquinas, governed medieval theology. Aquinas was simply more

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1. Cur Deus Homo 1:12 Library of Christian Classics Vol X p 120
2. ibid 11:1 Library of Christian Classics Vol X p 146

concerned to insist that the benefits of Christ's work came to men through the sacraments. He also developed the idea of infused grace enabling men to earn merit in virtue of which they might appear confidently before God.

The one great medieval thinker who stood out against this was Peter Abelard. For him complicated arguments about whether Christ's death was a ransom price, a punishment or a satisfaction, simply missed the point. Men had disobeyed God but all they needed to do was to repent. God was willing to forgive them and Jesus was the bearer and the pledge of this forgiveness. His patience through misunderstanding, persecution and suffering were both a revelation of God's attitude and a call to men to repent. The sheer simplicity of Abelard's presentation made him attractive to many at the beginning of this century, and we shall consider the representation of his thought in the work of Hastings Rashdall.

It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the Reformation was a dispute about the significance of the work of Christ and the means by which its benefit was appropriated. Luther and Calvin sought to recover the New Testament sense of immediacy and free personal intercourse with a forgiving and active God. Luther criticised the Roman sacramental system and claimed that the gospel of free forgiveness, which he found through the scriptures, had, for all practical purposes, been trapped in the system. Both Reformers stress the importance of scripture and the work of the Holy Spirit in conveying grace to the faithful, though they would claim not to undervalue the true role of sacraments.

If the stress on personal experience was different, it could be claimed that on what might be called the 'mechanics' of the work of Christ their thought was largely a continuation of what had gone before. Since the publication of Aulen's '<u>Christus Victor</u>' it has been widely argued that Luther was an exponent of the 'Classic' theory of atonement. Some of his language supports this, but his chief emphasis is on penal substitution, Christ bearing the punishment which was due to sinful men.[1] But when he uses the

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1. cf <u>Commentary on Galatians</u> 3:13, 4:4, and passim.

metaphor of a court room, and speaks of Christ making satisfaction for the sins of men, this is not a return to Anselm's thinking. With Anselm the picture was of God appearing before some independent judge as a plaintiff against man in a civil action, with Luther the idea is of God as the judge and man as the accused in a criminal action.

Calvin too stresses the substitutionary element, and seems to see sacrifice as substitutionary suffering. He suggests that the Biblical language which speaks of God's wrath against sin is an accommodation to men's understanding, but insists that it must still be taken very seriously. But he specifically guards himself against the idea of a loving Son placating an angry Father, he was far too good a Biblical scholar for that, "The love of God the Father precedes our reconciliation in Christ; or rather it is because he first loves, that he afterwards reconciles us to himself." (Inst 11:16:3). This point is worth emphasising since it is an advance on many previous positions, and also on many later so-called Calvinist ones.

Both Luther and Calvin also speak of the perfect life of Christ being imputed to the believer, and of the importance of Jesus as a teacher. In spite of his stress on the cross, Calvin argues that the whole life of Christ works our atonement, and has a rich stream of 'deification' thinking when he stresses the believer's incorporation into Christ. But with both it was the stress on immediate personal response which set them aside from the complicated medieval system.

At the end of the Reformation period the main lines had been set along which thinking on this subject was to proceed until fairly recent times. The fossilising of Calvin's thought by such Puritan divines as John Owen and Jonathan Edwards seemed at least to make the whole thing clear. Even the view of Grotius, that Christ's sufferings are not exactly equivalent to men's deserts but that they maintain the relation of God to His creatures as a just 'Rector', moves within the same complex of ideas. It was in direct opposition to Edwards' Calvinism that McLeod Campbell attempted to draw attention away from What Christ does for us, to what he does in us, and to use more personal and less external categories. A movement which, we shall see, carried on into the twentieth century.

We have seen then that the work of Christ can be seen as ethical example; vicarious victory; entry of divine influence to reverse the corruption of the race and bestow the gift of deification; satisfaction; perfect sacrifice or penal substitution. Frequently more than one view is found in the same theologian and each has a number of variations.

Turning to the appropriation of Christ's work we see the power of moral inspiration; the illumination of divine wisdom; the possibility of a work done for men almost in spite of themselves of which they need to be told; stress on sacraments; and stress on immediate experience, normally associated with scripture and preaching. Often these variations lead to a division between those theories which are broadly objective, stressing what God has done for men, and those which are broadly subjective, stressing what he does in men; though this division itself is open to criticism. We shall keep these varying theories and responses in mind as we consider five representative English theologians of the early Twentieth century.

However, we must note that different historical periods and different temperaments bring forth different types of theory. An age conscious of hostile forces was doubtless receptive to the 'Classic' view; one conscious of decay would respond to ideas of deification; Anselm's teaching very clearly reflects his feudal background; and the legal terminology of the Reformers and their followers reflected their own age. Furthermore the different approaches of an Abelard or a Luther seem clearly to reflect the temperament and experiences of the men concerned as well as the problems of their age. Therefore, before proceeding, it will be necessary to look, very broadly, at the background of thought, particularly religious thought, in the first half of the twentieth century.

II. THEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

James Denney was born in 1856. He established his reputation as a Biblical Scholar and Theologian in the last decade of the nineteenth century, and became Professor of Systematic and Pastoral Theology at Glasgow in 1897. Donald Baillie's best known book 'God was in Christ' was first published in 1947. An appendix to it was the last writing he completed before his death in 1954. Our background therefore covers nearly three-quarters of a century. It was a period which saw great changes in the position of Great Britain and the attitude of her people, not only their religious attitude.

In the closing years of Victoria's reign and for some time afterwards England was the centre of the largest and most powerful empire the world had known. Rich and powerful she seemed to face the future with confidence and a rather smug sense of security. In spite of growing social unrest and dissatisfaction with the rigid class system, the prevailing mood was of complacency and optimism.

The England of the nineteen fifties could in many respects hardly have been more different. Two world wars had shattered the complacency and drastically altered England's position. The empire was on the way to becoming a commonwealth, opportunities in Europe seemed to have passed, and even her most chauvinistic leaders were obliged to admit that Britain was no longer a first class world power.

There had been gains. The Welfare State was on the way to becoming a reality, and great strides had been made in such fields as health and education. But it was accompanied for many by a sense of sad disillusionment. The New Jerusalem did not look like providing a sense of security among its inhabitants. Use of atomic power at Hiroshima and Nagasaki had produced a sense of disenchantment with humanity. There was an uneasy awareness that a war of unimaginable horror was a possibility, and, for the first time in centuries, no Englishman would be in a position to do anything at all about it.

Some were convinced that the nation's basic need was spiritual, and that the malaise could only be cured by religious revival. That there was at least some truth in this may be indicated by the success of the American evangelist Dr. Billy Graham who attracted thousands to London's Harringay arena nightly for three months in the year of Baillie's death. Certainly institutional religion had little hold on the lives of the British people. Rowntree and Lavers reported that in York on a Sunday in 1948 only one citizen in twenty one attended Anglican worship, whereas in 1901 it had been one in seven. (English Life and Leisure cited by D.L. Edwards Religion and Change p 94). Though there is reason to believe that the church's hold had been weakening before the turn of the century. Yet the period is not without interesting theological work and vigorous debate.

It is often felt that the Victorian age was one of settled religious faith. Certainly the upper and middle classes generally attended church, and the lower classes outwardly accepted religion. It was an age of missionary zeal, and there was great interest in theological literature. Yet L.E. Elliott-Binns described it as "... supremely an age of doubt and conflict, and also of much inconsistency." He points out that, "The biographies of the later nineteenth century contain not a few records of prolonged, and often indecisive conflict in the minds of those who sought to reconcile their spiritual needs with their intellectual principles." (The Development of English Theology in the Later Nineteenth Century p 7f)

The conflicts referred to came first from the natural sciences. It was a period of great advance in the natural sciences, so much so that at one point the concept of 'Science' was almost deified, and the pronouncements of scientists were treated with the awe and reverence which had once been accorded to theologians.

Geology undermined the Genesis accounts of creation. Then, more dramatically, biology with the theory of evolution caused consternation in conservative religious circles. It involved a denial of the Genesis creation narratives and, by implication, a number of related doctrines. The traditional conception of man as specially created by God and endowed with capacity for communion with Him was replaced

by a doctrine which traced his origin to the operation of natural and impersonal laws. With this went the denial of the related doctrine of the fall which explained man's loss of communion with God. Hence it was a popular gibe among the anti-orthodox that man had fallen upwards. An almost equally serious result was that the apologist was robbed of one of his favourite theistic arguments, that from design. Nature was depicted as a ruthless struggle for survival rather than as the vast, complex, but exceptionally well-oiled machine which Christian apologists had traditionally claimed it to be, an argument given classic expression in Paley's illustration of the watch and the watch-maker. Underlying all this of course was the realisation that if the creation narratives were false the old idea of the Bible as containing divine revelation in infallibly true propositions must be abandoned.

With science attacking from without, the church seemed to many to be in greater danger from within. Rumours came from Germany of what came to be known as 'Higher Criticism'. Scholars inside the church argued that the Old Testament was not what it seemed. It was suggested that much of what had been taken as history was in fact folk-lore, the fact that it was said to be folk-lore with a moral was not much consolation to bewildered conservatives.

No doubt for many humble believers Darwin and his followers, together with the Biblical critics, were veritable anti-christs, and they were content with the traditional appeal to scripture as 'Word of God'. Thus when '<u>Essays and Reviews</u>' (1860) shortly followed by Colenso's '<u>Introduction to the Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua</u>' (1862) thrust these views upon the attention of the English religious public, there was widespread support, especially among the clergy, for the indictment of two of the contributors to '<u>Essays and Reviews</u>' for heresy, and for the deposing of Colenso, Bishop of Natal, from his see. Similarly, twenty five years later, Spurgeon, the conservative Baptist leader, got considerable support from the rank and file of his own denomination and beyond when, in the 'Down Grade' controversy, he denounced as heretical those who accepted the critical conclusions concerning the inspiration of scripture.[1] But clearly such an attitude could not be maintained. It was impossible for educated

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1. cf J.W. Grant: <u>Free Churchmanship in England 1870-1940</u> p 93f

men to adopt one attitude for their religion while preferring another for their intellectual lives.

If denial of the new movements was impossible there had to be some concession, accommodation or thorough-going reconstruction from the religious camp. A reconstruction came from the University of Oxford. The collection of essays '<u>Lux Mundi</u>' appeared in 1889, the work of a group of 'High' Anglicans under the leadership of Charles Gore, then Principal of Pusey House and later Bishop of Worcester and Oxford. Gore claimed that he and his collaborators were " ... servants of the Catholic Creed and Church, aiming only at interpreting the faith we have received." Though he admitted that the intellectual, social and scientific changes of the age were such as to " ... necessitate some general restatement of its claim and meaning ..." (<u>Lux Mundi</u> p viii). For a book with such a modest aim its effect was phenomenal. J.K. Mozley said of it, "Few books in modern times have so clearly marked the presence of a new era and so deeply influenced its character ..." (<u>Some Tendencies in British Theology</u> p 17).

Most interest at the time was roused by Gore's article on '<u>The Holy Spirit and Inspiration</u>' in which he showed that he no longer held the inerrancy of scripture and adumbrated the Kenotic Christology which he put forward later in his Bampton Lectures. But more important was the general acceptance of contemporary intellectual ideas and the willingness to work within them. Particularly was this so with the idea of evolution.

The theory of evolution made a positive as well as negative contribution to religious thought. Beginning as a scientific hypothesis in the field of biology it was extended to cover every part of man's being and history. Man, nature, society and religion were all seen as on a steady evolutionary march from worse to better. 'Progress' was the watch-word of the age, with the implication that the present was a great improvement on the past and that far greater things lay in store in the future.

What might be called the philosophical undergirding for this type

of thought was found in Hegelianism. For Hegel everything must be knowable and thus reducable to mind. The ultimate reality is pure thought or spirit which manifests itself in various ways, but supremely in the human mind or spirit, so that the activities of the human mind or spirit are the best clue, and the only means, for understanding the ultimate reality or world spirit. H.R. Mackintosh says, "No one has ever been quite sure what Hegel believed about God, but we shall not be far out if we describe his general system as a form of pantheistic Monism or logical Evolutionism." (Types of Modern Theology p 102). Being, like thought, is a dialectic process which moves forward by the reconciliation of opposites. As in thought progress is made by the reconciliation of thesis and antithesis in synthesis, both thesis and antithesis being necessary for each other and the final synthesis, so in history, Hegel claimed, we can see the same thing happening. Thus he described history as God's realisation of himself through, or in the process of, human experience.

Hegel saw himself as a Christian apologist. "Nothing can be more certain than that Hegel meant to be friendly; indeed he appears to have been quite sincerely persuaded that for the first time he was giving the Christian religion an opportunity to understand itself. Reconciliation was to be the watchword of the new era. The truth formulated by speculation is actually none other than that preached by religion in more childlike tones." (ibid p 106). Understanding of ultimate reality as pure thought was only possible for philosophers. For the masses the truth would continue to be taught in the pictorial language of religion and grasped by the imagination, a lower faculty than reason.

Such an approach had advantages. It gave a spiritual view of the world, saving man's spiritual instincts from scientific agnosticism or positivism. Stress on the clash of thesis and antithesis showed that progress need not be smooth, though the notion of progress remained central. Room was found for the philosopher and the simple believer, and traditional language was not discarded. As spiritual and material should not be rigidly distinguished it was congenial to those enthusiastic for social improvement. Finally, not least attractive in this period, it acknowledged the dignity and importance of man.

But Christianity had to pay for its philosophical respectability. No more could be heard of the uniqueness of Jesus. Hegel could accept incarnation, but not unique incarnation. This was not always realised in England. For him the two natures language was a pictorial expression of the fact that there is no real distinction between God and man. Both need each other. Mackintosh comments "The idealism of Hegel being rigorously immanental, the Absolute mind is not another mind, but the essence of all finite minds, and they are constituents of it." (ibid p 103). Jesus of Nazareth was one of the 'great men' of history who had caught a glimpse of the speculative truth which Hegel had now worked out, and had tried to teach it to his disciples.

This philosophy was introduced to England by the influential Oxford philosopher T.H. Green. Its impact on theology here was by no means as great as it had been in Germany. It has never been usual in England for one philosophical system to completely dominate the theological scene. Nevertheless it had considerable influence, and it is significant that many of the contributors to 'Lux Mundi' had been pupils of Green. Furthermore the sub-title "a series of studies in the religion of the incarnation", showed a distinct and no doubt conscious movement from the Atonement as the central interest in theology. For those who wish to minimise the distinction between God and man the Incarnation is a more convenient starting point.

However this should not be exaggerated. Anglican scholars with their traditional fondness for Patristic studies have always given more prominence to the Incarnation than is common with those of a more Reformed tradition. Furthermore it must be stressed that Gore particularly could not be accused of overlooking man's need for redemption. Yet 'Lux Mundi' shows an almost indecent anxiety to baptise the stress on evolution and progress into the faith, and to give an immanent rather than transcendent view of God. Aubrey Moore suggested that " ... in the providence of God, the mission of modern science was to bring home to our unmetaphysical ways of thinking the great truth of the Divine immanence in creation ... the Divine immanence must be for our age, as for the Athanasian age, the meeting point of the religious and philosophic view of God ..." (op cit p 100). J.R. Illingworth regretted that the Atonement had often been treated

in isolation to the detriment of the doctrine of Incarnation. In his view "The Incarnation opened heaven, for it was the revelation of the Word; but it also reconsecrated earth, for the Word was made Flesh and dwelt among us. And it is impossible to read history without feeling how profoundly the religion of the Incarnation has been a religion of humanity." (ibid p 211)

The 'Lux Mundi' party dominated Anglican theology, and to a lesser extent all English theology, for thirty or more years. For Gore, though he worked out his Christology more fully in his Bampton Lectures of 1892, the movement had gone far enough. Gore was always loyal to the Catholic Creeds. We shall note that his loyalty earned him something of a reputation as a reactionary. But others wished to go further. A stress on incarnation accompanied by a virtual neglect of atonement, particularly at a time when men's minds were somewhat intoxicated by ideas of progress and the excellence of humanity, can lead to a very one-sided presentation of the Gospel which is in fact no Gospel. While the best minds in the movement did not go that far others did, chief among them R.J. Campbell.

As minister of the City Temple in London, Campbell occupied the most influential pulpit in Congregationalism at a time when great influence was exerted from pulpits. In the autumn of 1906 he spoke to the London Board of Congregational Ministers on "The Changing Sanctions of Popular Theology", a paper later published in 'The Christian World', interpreting God's dealings with men almost exclusively in terms of immanence. The result was a controversy in which Campbell was charged with departing from the Evangelical faith. Soon after its beginning he outlined his position in a somewhat disputatious book 'The New Theology' (1907). Other books and pamphlets followed, and he organised his followers into the 'Progressive League' which he soon re-organised, in the hope of excluding extremists, as 'the Liberal Christian League.'

Campbell defined his position as "The attitude of those who believe that the fundamentals of the Christian faith need to be rearticulated in terms of the immanence of God". Apart from the explicit use of 'immanence' this is not far from what Gore had

given as the aim of the '*Lux Mundi*' group. Later, in a Daily Mail interview, Campbell described his message as "the Gospel of the humanity of God and the divinity of Man." (cited J.W. Grant *op cit* p 135). From this point of view historical revelation was set aside and one doctrine after another was explained in terms of evolving human excellence. The uniqueness of Christ was a special object of attack. "Nothing", writes J.K. Mozley, "gave greater offence than his apparent refusal to allow that Jesus was divine in any other way than was possible for every man." (*op cit* p 35). The Bible was replaced by appeal to inner witness, "Never mind what the Bible says about this or that, if you are in search of truth, but trust the voice of God within you." (attributed to Campbell by W.H.S. Aubrey, in *The Old Faith and the New Theology*. cited by J.W. Grant *op cit* p 138).

The movement represented by Campbell and his immediate followers did not have wide support, even in his own denomination. But it brought to light the dangers inherent in the stress on immanence and the neglect of other aspects of the faith.[1]

Hegel's was not the only theological influence to come from Germany. Against its arid intellectualism Albrecht Ritschl had protested in favour of moral and personal religion, and probably had more effect on English theology. He set himself to establish the primacy of historic revelation, denying man's ability to know God apart from his initiative. Thus he restored emphasis to the historic Jesus, showing that Christian faith means personal involvement and commitment to him. But, on the debit side, he tended to minimise dogma and give impetus to subjectivism.

The chief result was Liberal Protestantism which took up the criticism of dogma, seeing it as the Hellenising of pure New Testament faith, and attempted to get back behind the religion *about* Jesus, found in Paul and John, to the religion *of* Jesus, which, it was supposed could be found by historical criticism of the synoptics.

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1. In fairness to Campbell it should be noted that he later made it clear that he had ceased to hold the doctrines of the 'New Theology' movement. He returned to the Anglican church, to which he had previously belonged, becoming Canon and Chancellor of Chichester.

Such a view had been propounded in England by Hatch as early as 1888, but its real apostle was Adolf von Harnack in his 'History of Dogma' (1886-89), and in a course of lectures given in Berlin in 1900 and translated into English as 'What is Christianity' in 1901. For Harnack the essence of Christ's teaching was summed up in two concepts the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, the rest was Hellenistic accretion.

Criticism of the New Testament had not been common in England. The work of the Cambridge scholars Westcott, Lightfoot and Hort had seemed to guard it against the attacks which 'Higher Criticism' had launched upon the Old. Now that changed as English scholars followed German ones in insisting that Christianity should be based on the 'Jesus of History' rather than the 'Apostolic Christ'. The Jesus they meant was the result of historical criticism of the Gospels. He tended to be a noble ethical teacher remarkably similar, as Schweitzer was soon to point out, to the idea which the scholar conducting the enquiry held before himself. This allowed for considerable variety, but there was little place for miracle or claims to Messiahship. It was agreed that Jesus displayed unique moral perfection which was a reflection of God and an attraction to man, but this falls some way short of Chalcedonian Christology.

The Roman Catholics Loisy and Tyrell attacked this view. Loisy argued that Jesus was an eschatological preacher, but that the kingdom he had foretold developed slowly in the Catholic church. Thus he could be sceptical about the gospels but reverent in his approach to church and sacraments. However such views on scripture, though acceptable in German or English universities, were unacceptable to Rome, and both Loisy and Tyrell were excommunicated in the encyclical 'Pascendi Gregis' (1907) and what had come to be known as Catholic Modernism was condemned.

But in England, in spite of protests from Gore who argued that subscription to the creeds demanded of an Anglican clergyman must involve acceptance of the Virgin Birth and the bodily resurrection of Jesus, the Modernist movement gained strength. It was greatly assisted by the emotional overtones of words such as 'liberal' and

'modern' with the implication that those who opposed them were narrow and old-fashioned. Canon Lloyd has drawn attention to the pervasive influence of the 'Liberal' appeal.[1] He also quotes from William Sanday in a pamphlet against Gore, "I believe that the cultivated modern man may enter the Church of Christ with his head erect - with some change of language due to differences of time, but all of the nature of re-interpretation of old truths, and without any real equivocation at his heart." (The Church of England in the Twentieth Century Vol 1 p 77). The cultivated modern man was the person to whom modernists tried to appeal. He could not accept the supernatural, and was convinced that sin was, at most, an old-fashioned word for the survival of animal tendencies in the evolving human species. For his benefit the Modernists seemed willing to sacrifice any element of the supernatural in Gospel or creed, but without conspicuous success.

Confidence in the Jesus of history was shaken by Schweitzer's 'Quest for the Historical Jesus' which appeared in English in 1910. Schweitzer stressed the eschatological element in Jesus's teaching while the ethical element, which for the Modernist was the heart of the Gospel, was dismissed as an interim ethic. Schweitzer over-reached himself. He leaned heavily on certain proof-texts, notably Matt 10:23, and neglected other parts of the gospels. But after his book the Liberal Jesus was never quite the same again.

However the most devastating blow to Modernism was the war of 1914-18. Modern cultivated man showed just how far he had advanced beyond the need of supernatural redemption. Now the most optimistic believer in progress and essential human goodness might have wondered whether more was needed than fearless Biblical criticism and enlightened moral optimism. Yet the movement survived the war, at least initially, and held its most highly publicised and controversial meeting at Girton College Cambridge in 1921. We must return to this meeting in connection with Hastings Rashdall who was a prominent participant. Here it is enough to say that it was accused of making modern man the arbiter of the Gospel and was generally condemned.

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1. R. Lloyd: The Church of England in the Twentieth Century Vol 1 p 92ff.

Attempts to get a definite pronouncement against the Conference from the Convocation of Canterbury meeting in 1922 were diplomatically resisted. Lloyd comments, "Perhaps it was the wisest course because as by instinct or inspiration the course of theology followed thereafter very different and much more suggestive paths, ... Thereafter modernism in the Anglican Church might remain as an organised party, ... but its contentions were seen to be side-issues and its characteristic language to be archaic jargon. The Girton Conference of 1921 was the last breathing of a one-time giant soon destined to become a living corpse." (ibid Vol 11 p 47).

Ritschl not only directed attention to the historic Jesus, he also stressed personal commitment and experience and thus opened the way to subjectivism. The appeal to Religious experience was not new. It had always been for many, especially Evangelicals, the surest proof of their faith, against which no intellectual argument could ultimately prevail.[1] But it had not previously been used as a major theological argument as it now came to be used. Such arguments did not just appeal to dramatic conversion experiences but to 'the inner light' and 'the divinity in every man'. Works by Inge, von Hugel, and Underhill led in a revived interest in mysticism. Horton Davies suggests that men were tired of the scholars' approach to religion and turned instead to the experts, the practitioners.[2] But in appealing to mysticism there is a danger that no distinction will be made between Christian and non-Christian varieties. Any vague spiritual experience is sometimes thought to be enough and the result can easily be Pantheism. Certainly there was some blurring of the edges, but neither Inge nor von Hugel were willing to lose the transcendent God of the Bible in the currently popular stress on immanence.

These writers introduced a much needed positive note, and their influence on some was deep and lasting. Yet it was hardly very wide. Further, appeals to experience were open to criticism from the growing science of psychology. Some psychologists were sympathetic to religion. But, as Elliott Binns comments, their arguments " ... were often accompanied by the patronising admission that

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1. cf R.W. Dale: The Living Christ and the Four Gospels p 23
2. Worship and Theology in England Vol V p 136

religion might be a useful thing, even if its truth was a matter of indifference." (op cit p 117).

With the decline of Modernism after the Girton Conference a different type of theology took the centre of the stage, at least in Anglicanism. Its manifesto was the collection "Essays Catholic and Critical" edited by E.G. Selwyn in 1927. Its brightest star was William Temple. Broadly described as Liberal Catholicism, this school of thought kept the strengths of the immanentalists without losing confidence in a transcendent God. In many ways it was a return to the catholicism of Gore, to whom Temple was much indebted. There was less uncertainty in the face of Biblical criticism, and a renewed willingness to speak about the classical doctrines of sin, judgement, grace and redemption, though perhaps not to speak of them in the classical way. There was also an influential renewal of interest in the doctrine of the church, accompanying a growing concern for church unity.

About Temple, A.M. Ramsey writes, "He felt that the philosophical climate of the time was friendly to a spiritual interpretation of the world, unfriendly to a particular revelation. It was credible that God and man could be united in the whole process of the world, scarcely credible that deity could do things in particular. Against such assumptions Temple set himself to vindicate, in idealism's own terms, the rationality of an Incarnation and a particular revelation." (From Gore to Temple p 148). The attempted vindication came chiefly in three classic works, Mens Creatrix (1917), Christus Veritas (1924) and Nature, Man and God (1934). These were attempts to justify, or at least explain, historic Christianity in philosophical terms, and were written with a confidence which, at least for the first one, was very rare at the time.

But it is probably no insult to Temple to suggest that his work was the last flowering of Hegelianism in the idealist form which it had taken in England. Its time had past, at least temporarily. Having spoken of Temple's aim to relate faith to contemporary philosophy and find in Christ the key to the rationality and unity of the world, Ramsey comments "Nothing, therefore, in his last years

befitted his greatness more than the humility with which he acknowledged that his quest had failed, and that other tasks were superseding it." (op cit p 160). This acknowledgement came in the preface to the report of the Commission on Doctrine in the Church of England, a body which was set up in 1922, after the Girton Conference, but did not report until 1939. The immediate future lay with 'neo-orthodox' Biblical theology whose chief exponent was Karl Barth.

Barth had been a Swiss pastor before the first world war, and has described eloquently his own break with Liberal Protestantism when he found that most of his own teachers had pledged support for Wilhelm 11 and the war policy.[1] The story of his subsequent development and the alternative he suggested to Liberal theology has often been told. From the angry, dialectical, style of his Romans in 1918, to the measured profundity of his Church Dogmatics begun in 1932 and not completed at his death in 1968, he is concerned with one question, "What has the church to say to modern man that modern man could not say to himself?" There could hardly be a more different starting point from the wooing of cultivated modern man which we have seen in English theology.

Barth was concerned to stress that God had acted in the person and work of Jesus as this is witnessed in scripture. Hence the complement to his criticism of man-centred theology was his constant appeal to scripture. Not that the Bible had not previously been read, nobody could accuse the writers of Liberal 'Lives of Jesus' of that, but Barth approached it not to dissect it by means of the correct criticism, but to hear a Word of God from it.

In England he was often dismissed as a fundamentalist, or it was patronisingly acknowledged that he had drawn attention to some neglected themes but in a rather extravagant and one-sided way. He was not widely read. But, strangely, a similar though less dramatic movement was gaining strength in England. At first it was apparently quite independent of Barth, but later it learned much from him.

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1. cf The Humanity of God p 14

P.T. Forsyth, Principal of Hackney Theological College from 1901 until his death in 1921, had already, while Liberalism was at its height sought to recall his contemporaries to a deeper more dogmatic theology. His writings contain many of the themes which later appeared in Barth. Generally he was ignored or regarded as a reactionary, but towards the end of his life there were signs that he was being taken more seriously. The Anglican J.K. Mozley sought, at first without much success, to draw attention to his work within the Church of England. More effective was the work of an Anglo-Catholic scholar, a contributor to Essays Catholic and Critical, Sir Edwyn Hoskyns.

Hoskyns, who taught the New Testament at Cambridge from 1919 to 1937, set himself to remedy the sense of uncertainty produced by the long reign of negative New Testament criticism. Without denying the rights of criticism, or the gains it had made, he concentrated on presenting the positive New Testament message. He spoke of Jesus as Himself the supernatural Gospel of God, and showed that the Liberal Christ was not to be found in the New Testament. He seems to have begun his work independently of Barth, and Anglican scholars seem anxious to point out that he was not a Barthian.[1] Nevertheless, in 1933 he translated the second edition of Barth's Romans, and clearly he understood and greatly admired Barth. Certainly he was instrumental in preparing English theology to hear what Barth, and other Continental theologians had to say.

Thus there came about a revival of what came to be called 'Biblical Theology'. Critical work had sapped confidence in the Bible, producing a vague but widely held view that it had been disproved. Criticism had generally been presented, or had filtered through, to the general public in a negative and destructive way. For more than a generation many ministers of all denominations had unfortunately considered it a mark of academic integrity and sophistication to speak of what they disbelieved about the Bible more than about its positive message. Probably they were not trained to do anything else. The disastrous effects of this mood are still with us, in self-consciously enlightened modernity on the one hand and

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1. cf R. Lloyd op cit Vol 11 p 57; A.M. Ramsey op cit p 137

rigid defensive literalism on the other. But between the wars there was some recovery. On a pastoral level the Bible Reading Fellowship encouraged private devotional reading. On the more academic front it once more became customary to see the Bible as a whole, and the English tradition of Biblical Scholarship, never really dormant, flourished anew in men such as Rowley, Dodd, Taylor and the Mansons, ably served by popularisers such as Hunter and Barclay.

After 1945 there was greater willingness, perhaps born of despair of other hopes, to pay attention to Biblical theology. It was assisted by an awareness of what the German church, which was its source had suffered. There was an almost romantic appeal about 'The German Church Struggle', and a willingness to hear the theology which had sustained it. R.S. Paul comments "If 'continental theology' could say a sustaining word to the Confessing Church in Germany, or to the persecuted churches of Occupied Europe, then it had something to say to the disillusionment of England's lost securities and to the aftermath of her outworn prides." (op cit p 244).

At the end of our period then we find a more confident and dogmatic theology. But it is now carried on in an increasingly more secular society the majority of whose members are content to leave the institutional church out of their lives and thinking, though many, if pressed, would claim to be Christian. The period has seen the rise and fall of a proud, confident, man-centred liberal theology, and its replacement by a dogmatic theocentric neo-orthodoxy. Though it is arguable that Barth was never understood in England, and that 'Barthianism' had begun to wane by the end of the period.

We noted earlier that the pictures used to present the doctrine of atonement and its appropriation vary from age to age in accordance with contemporary thinking and needs. That is not to say that all pictures are equally good, or that they all equally faithfully and adequately reflect the New Testament. We now turn to consider five representative teachers of the period to ask how they presented these themes, and what permanent elements of truth we can find in their work.

III JAMES DENNEY (1856-1917)

We have seen that the period during which Denney did his theological work was a period of growing liberalism. Widespread application of the theory of evolution encouraged optimistic ideas of human perfectibility and progress. It seemed to many that at least the outward lot of man was getting better and better. The physical sciences promised the means to transform life within a few generations. Meanwhile a vague but deeply felt sense of moral improvement was in the air. Past ages appeared primitive and uncouth. They were to be outgrown spiritually and intellectually, and, as this was done, old fashioned ideas of sin and guilt before God would drop away.

In more obviously theological areas 'modern cultivated man' seemed to rule the field in the persons of the immensely learned German critical and historical scholars. It seemed that critical study of scripture had undermined its authority as the inspired word of God and brought the Hebrew-Christian tradition into line with other religions. But it was generally held to be the best of them, a kind of final flowering of man's progressive awareness of God and his search for spiritual truth and satisfaction. More importantly critical study seemed to have brought the figure of Jesus to life in a way hitherto unsuspected. No longer a dim figure in stained glass windows, he stood forth in flesh and blood. If this meant, on the one hand, that the supernatural framework in which he had previously been presented had to go - and with it, ultimately, his unique divinity - this loss seemed to be more than made up by the gain in his humanity. In fact comparatively few seem to have thought through the new approach to its logical conclusion. It was sufficient that he could now be hailed as 'one of us', a heroic figure indeed, but a human and approachable one, with a message about the love of his equally easily approachable father.

Adjustments had to be made to the traditional patterns of dogmatic theology. Dogmatism was to be thrown off, and nowhere was

this more apparent than in thinking about the atonement. It was quite unthinkable to continue to speak in terms of payment, or of the satisfaction of divine justice. The Father of Jesus could not be seen as a God of wrath. If what had been called sin was still to have any place in theology it could certainly not have the importance it had once had. That men do wrong, that, in spite of their moral evolution, they are subject to weakness, was allowed. However what was required was forgiveness and renewed moral effort rather than costly redemption from outside. Thus any picture of atonement was to be in these gentler, more human, more humane terms. Generally this led to a tendency to stress the life of Jesus rather than his death and to make the incarnation the central theme of theology.

Over half a century after his death it has become customary to look back on Denney as a conservative or traditionalist out of step with the liberalism of his day. Together with P.T. Forsyth, he is seen as a champion of a rather old-fashioned orthodoxy, valiantly withstanding the rising tides of liberalism until the first world war and the work of Karl Barth should combine to turn them back, at least temporarily. There is some truth in this picture but not much, and it is doubtful whether Denney or his contemporaries would have recognised it. While he saw himself as having a message to his generation, and considered it a duty to point out weaknesses in 'the modern mind', he certainly did not turn his back on what was going on around him. Some regarded him as a dangerous liberal.

He insisted that theological thinking should not be divorced from the best contemporary scientific and philosophical thinking, but that the theologian needed a coherent picture of the world as a whole. At the beginning of one of his earliest works '<u>Studies in Theology</u>' (1894) he argues that theology "... must contain the ideas and principles which enable us to look at our life and our world as a whole, and to take them into our religion, instead of leaving them outside." (<u>op cit</u> p 1). Arguing against the idea that religion and science should each be allowed their own sphere of influence and left there, so that they should not come into conflict, he asserts, "The religious man has to live his religious life in nature, and to maintain his faith in God there; the scientific man, if he be religious,

has precisely the same task; and they are bound, by the very nature of intelligence, to come to an understanding. ... We deceive ourselves, and try to evade the difficulties of the task which is laid upon us, when we deny the essential relation in which theology must stand to all the contents and problems of our mind and life." (ibid p 3f) At this period he was quite violently opposed to the anti-metaphysical strain in the thought of Ritschl. By the end of his life he had adopted a much more Ritschlian position, but he never changed his mind about the relationship which should exist between theology and the best contemporary thought.

In his attitude to scripture also he was far from being a rigid conservative. He regarded scripture as a means of grace, but this did not make it immune from criticism. Rather his use of scripture should save the Christian from undue concern about the results of critical study. "... a Christian who knows that God does speak to the soul through the Scriptures ought not to speak of criticism as an alien or hostile power, with which he may be compelled, against his will, to go so far, but which he must ever regard with suspicion." (ibid p 213). Thus we find him outlining sympathetically the critical positions of his day, and elsewhere roundly asserting that, "Belief in the inspiration of Scripture is neither the beginning of the Christian life nor the foundation of Christian theology;..." (The Atonement and the Modern Mind p 248[1]).

Denney did not get his reputation as a champion of orthodoxy by ignoring or resisting the thought of his day. He differed from most of his contemporaries because of his starting point, and because of the relationship he adopted to modern thought. He was a New Testament scholar and an evangelist. From these two positions he stood apart from and criticised many of his contemporaries. It was his contention that the starting point for Christian theology should be the New Testament picture of Jesus and the New Testament message

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1. 'The Atonement and the Modern Mind' was published in 1903, mainly to answer points raised by reviewers and correspondents after the publication of 'The Death of Christ' in the previous year. A revised edition of both together was issued in 1911. References are to the pagination of the 1911 edition.

of redemption. While this should not be presented in a way deliberately and glaringly at variance with modern thought if that could be avoided, it was the New Testament pattern which was to be normative, not modern man's enlightened conscience or higher aspirations.

Writers of Liberal 'lives' of Jesus were also keen to begin from a picture of Jesus. However, as we have seen, their result was generally a moral preacher. They sought the religion of Jesus, in which he was the example of worship, rather than the religion about Jesus, in which he was the object of worship. Ideas of love and divine fatherhood were generally presented in ways which omitted the note of redemption, and Paul was accused of 'Hellenising' the Gospel. The result was a widespread criticism of the 'orthodox' position. It was argued that the traditional stress on the death of Jesus was misplaced, or at least grossly one-sided. Atonement and incarnation were drawn together. When they were not actually made one it was nevertheless insisted that more stress must be put on the life of Jesus than had been customary.

We shall see that Denney accepted much of this criticism. He agreed that many traditional formulations of an 'objective' atonement were too external, and that place must properly be found for the entire life of Jesus in the work of reconciliation. Yet he differed fundamentally from many of his contemporaries. For Denney Jesus was not simply an example, his relationship with God was unique. "He was not a son among others, but the Son through whom alone the Father was interpreted to the world." (Studies in Theology p 31). Others would have agreed with this, but not so many would have agreed with him that the doctrine of atonement, the reconciliation of man to God, found its centre uniquely in the cross. As the central point of the New Testament, the atonement, he claims, "... is Christianity in brief; it concentrates in itself, as in a germ of infinite potency, all that the wisdom, power and love of God mean in relation to sinful men." (The Atonement and the Modern Mind p 243). Thus the cross and its interpretation became the chief theme of his writing. It was so in the early work 'Studies in Theology' (1894). He made a detailed study of the New Testament teaching in 'The Death of Christ' (1902)

arising from which came his study of '<u>The Atonement and the Modern Mind</u>' (1903). Arguing directly against theological liberalism, he set out in '<u>Jesus and the Gospel</u>' (1908) to show by the strict use of critical methods that Jesus himself saw himself as an object of faith, not its example, and saw his death as the chief purpose of his life. Finally he summed up his views in the posthumously published Cunningham Lectures '<u>The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation</u>' (1917).

Turning to his positive contribution, it will be as well to notice first how far he agrees with the critics of the 'so-called' orthodox position, and what he does not say. It was certainly not his view that the life and death of Jesus could or should be radically divided. In fact he believed that only a definite doctrine of atonement kept the place of Christ in the Gospels. Against those who saw incarnation, the taking of human nature by God, as itself the atonement, he suggests that this makes the earthly life of Jesus unnecessary and, for that reason, must be wrong. He argues that Athanasius, whom he sees as the chief patristic representative of this tradition, does not need the life of Jesus in his theology. For him the Logos removes or defeats corruption simply by coming in to humanity. Because of the divine law that death must follow sin he must die, but there is no logical reason why he should not have died at once. In fact Athanasius has to find room for the human experiences though, on his premisses, he cannot say why.[1] In the same way, he argues, those modern theologians who concentrate on the incarnation and see the cross as its result and not its purpose - he quotes Inge, Westcott and Wilson as examples[2] - do not realise that they are not only taking away, what they would consider undue, attention from Jesus' death, but also from his life. Of such an approach he writes, "It does not answer moral questions, especially those which bring the sinful man to despair; ... It does not contain a gospel for lost souls, but a philosophy for speculative minds." (<u>The Death of Christ</u> p 236)

In contrast to such views Denney wants to give full weight to the ministry of Jesus, and the fact that in him God entered into moral

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1. '<u>The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation</u>' pp 38ff
2. '<u>The Death of Christ</u>' pp 232ff; and '<u>The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation</u>' pp 240ff

and personal relations with men. Thus he is critical of ideas of merit and satisfaction whose development he traces from Tertullian through Anselm. He notes the movement back to personal terms in the Reformers, but regrets that in their successors there is a reversion to a Roman attitude in the stress put on statements of faith and correct formulae. Certainly in Protestant orthodoxy he sees the danger of not doing justice to God's love and of making the death of Christ a totally external, legal transaction. "... the idea that Christ was man's substitute or representative in the work of making atonement had too much lost its connection with love; it had become part of the plan of salvation, and its ethical character was impaired." (The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation p 118). Thus he welcomes greater stress on the love of God shown in the life and work of Jesus, and on the subjective effects of atonement. He expounds such passages as Jesus meeting with the sinful woman (Luke 7:36-50), and Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1ff), stressing the reconciling effect of his attitude. "This is happily one of the points of the gospel story about which there can be no dispute. There might be a question as to whether Jesus spoke any given word assigned to Him, or as to the circumstances in which it was spoken, or as to its proper application; but it is quite inconceivable that the evangelists should misrepresent so new and wonderful a thing as the attitude of Jesus to the sinful, or the reconciling power which accompanied it." (ibid p 12f).

In this mood he welcomes the work of Bushnell and MacLeod Campbell who in different ways interpreted Christ's work through love, stressing his identification with men in their need and despair. Here, he suggests, the personal element which had had a place for a time at the Reformation but had been unable to establish itself theologically comes out in new relief. So he can write, "Of all books that have ever been written on the atonement, as God's way of reconciling men to Himself, Macleod Campbell's is probably that which is most completely inspired by the spirit of the truth with which it deals." (ibid p 120). Later, in the same vein, "All that is positive in the doctrines of Bushnell and MacLeod Campbell, ... is to be welcomed without reserve. We are to think of the work of atonement or reconciliation as a work rising out of the situation in which Christ found Himself as a member of the human race; as one with us He

spontaneously, under the impulse of love, makes all our burdens His own." (ibid p 260). Yet, when all this has been said, Denney is convinced that this stress is but a part of the Gospel, and indeed of itself no true Gospel at all.

Protests against the rigidity of what had become the 'orthodox' formulae, with their division between Jesus' life and death and the externalising of the latter, were to be welcomed. But he feared lest, in reaction, the essential truth of the objective view of the atonement should be lost. There was a danger that stress on Jesus' spiritual identification with men and obedience to the Father would lead to a depreciation of His actual suffering and death. MacLeod Campbell tended to stress His 'spirit of obedience' or 'the spirit in which he died' as having atoning value, as opposed to 'the mere physical suffering'; and many others took a similar line. This, for Denney, was to introduce an air of unreality and was certainly not true to his reading of the New Testament. As he saw it both scripture and common sense put the death of Christ in the centre of the Gospel. "To an unsophisticated Christian, to talk of a redemption to which the death of Christ is not essential is to talk about nothing at all. The simplest evangelist here will always confound the subtlest theologian; the foolishness of God is wiser than men". (ibid p 269). The truth of the objective view had to be kept; there was an element of something done outside of us.

Neither critics or admirers have always seen the complexity and double-sidedness of Denney's attitude to the objective view of atonement, or the formulae in which it has traditionally been stated. He kept an awareness of the dangers of externality and the need for more ethical and personal concepts, together with a desire to keep the objective element. Writing about the response to 'The Death of Christ' he commented, "... few things have astonished me more than to be charged with teaching a 'forensic' or 'legal' or 'judicial' doctrine of atonement, resting, as such a doctrine must do, on a 'forensic' or 'legal' or 'judicial' conception of man's relation to God." (The Atonement and the Modern Mind p 271). Such phrases, uninterpreted, are not sufficiently personal. "To say that the relations of God and man are forensic is to say that they are regulated

by statute - that sin is a breach of statute - that the sinner is a criminal - and that God adjudicates on him by interpreting the statute in its application to his case. Everybody knows that this is a travesty of the truth, and it is surprising that any one should be charged with teaching it, or that anyone should applaud himself, as though he were in the foremost files of time, for not believing it." (ibid p 272). However, we shall see that, with proper safeguards, he was willing to speak of the atonement as forensic. The cross, he believed, must be the centre of the Gospel as an objective act of God. The orthodox formulae contain a great and basic truth. It may be that repetition of these formulae has become wearisome, "But it is not because the formulae are orthodox that they weary, it is because they are formal; the vital interest of the great realities which they enshrine has slipped from an unbelieving grasp, and left the preacher with nothing to deliver but words." (The Death of Christ p 220). That meant they had lost contact with the New Testament. The answer therefore was not simply to criticise the formulae, but to return to the New Testament.

Denney's treatment of the doctrine is based on a systematic study of the New Testament material in an attempt to show the place which the death of Christ had there and the interpretation put upon it by the Apostolic writers. The form of this study, and to a large extent the results, closely parallel that of Dale whose work 'The Atonement' (1875) was the last great apologia for the objective view. But Denney, writing later, has also to vindicate the unity of the New Testament teaching against the suggestion that there are in fact two Gospels, one in the synoptics the other in Paul. He seeks to show that the death of Christ is central to all parts of the New Testament, and that the New Testament writers saw it as the chief part of Jesus' work to which the atonement was to be attributed. A division between fact (synoptics) and interpretation (Paul), while it may be useful for thought should not be pressed. "The view Christians took of the books they valued was instinctively dogmatic without ceasing to be historical; or perhaps we may say, with a lively sense of their historical relations the Church had an instinctive feeling of the dogmatic import of the books in its New Testament." (ibid p 6). But

the death of Christ is neither simply history or dogma, nor the two together. For the writers of the New Testament it was also an experience of God in action, and that action had present significance. "The death of Christ in the New Testament is the death of one who is alive for evermore. To every New Testament writer Christ is the Lord, the living and exalted Lord, and it is impossible for them to think of His death except as an experience the result or virtue of which is perpetuated in His risen life." (ibid p 7). If these points, made in the introduction to his chief work on the Biblical evidence, are borne in mind, the occasional sense of abstraction which made one critic say that he was more interested in the death of Christ than the death of Christ,[1] is put into its proper perspective.

Denney surveys the Biblical evidence most fully in 'The Death of Christ'. However the same passages are also treated in other works, particularly of course in his commentaries. He finds in the death of Christ the dominant theme of the New Testament, and argues that it is understood in a substitutionary sense. He goes most readily to, and seems most at home in, the writings of Paul, and certain key passages there. We will therefore pass quickly over his comments on the rest of the New Testament before looking in rather more detail at those key Pauline passages.

In the synoptic Gospels the sheer space given to the Passion and death show its importance in the eyes of the evangelists. For Jesus himself it is sometimes argued that he only slowly realised that violent death would be part of his work. Yet against this the Baptism and Temptation stories, the significance of which Denney believes Jesus must have explained to his disciples later, indicate that he knew the way he should go from an early period. Submission to a baptism of repentance at all, and especially the influence on the narrative of the 'Servant' passages of second Isaiah, Denney takes as showing that "... the shadow of the world's sin lay on (his career) from the first." (ibid p 16).

During the ministry the 'bridegroom' saying (Mark 2:19f) shows

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1. A reviewer in 'London Quarterly Review' CXXIX (1918) p 259f

he anticipated a violent death, and later he made repeated attempts to teach the disciples that he was destined to die (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:31f). The death is covered by a sense of necessity (δεῖ), and though this could mean that he saw death as the inevitable result of his opponents hostility, the deeper reason was that he saw it as part of the divine plan. The ultimate source of the necessity is in the Servant passages of second Isaiah. His death was essential to his Messiahship. It was not, as some of Denney's contemporaries would have argued, simply the crowning service of his life and a possible way of winning to repentance some who had resisted his earlier appeals. His death was the very soul of his vocation.

Later there are two much more important references. First is the 'ransom' saying of Mark 10:45, "... it is not only far the simplest and most obvious interpretation, but far the most profound and the most consonant with the New Testament as a whole, that Jesus in this passage conceives the lives of the many as being somehow under forfeit, and teaches that the very object with which he came into the world was to lay down His own life as a ransom price that those to whom these forfeited lives belonged might obtain them again." (ibid p 31). The background of this line of thought is most likely to be Psalm 49:7f and Job 33:23f in both of which the idea of 'ransom' occurs as that at the cost of which deliverance is assured.

The other key synoptic passage is in the last supper narrative (Mark 14:22ff and parallels). Denney particularly draws attention to the reference to 'covenant blood'. He allows that the longer version in Matthew 26:28 "my blood of the new covenant which is shed for many unto remission of sins" may be an interpretative expansion. But the extra words are "... by a mind in a position naturally to know and understand what Jesus meant." (ibid p 38). For the first hearers this would be taken as a reference to the Sinai covenant of Exodus 24:8 and the promise of a new covenant in Jeremiah 31:31-34. It is too pedantic to argue that remission of sins was not in question at Sinai, "Covenant blood is sacrificial blood, and we have every reason to believe that sacrificial blood universally, ... was associated with propitiatory power." (ibid p 39).[1] "Hence", he says

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1. We shall later consider criticisms of this view of sacrifice.

in another place, "when we take into account our Lord's conception of His work as a whole, and especially His conception of a Son of Man who comes to His kingdom through a Passion interpreted in such wonderful words as Mark 10:45 and Matthew 26:28, we are able to say, with His authority behind us, that this Passion entered into the work of redeeming men, of forgiving them, and of reconciling them to God." (The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation p 141). There is no formal or abstract theology here in the synoptics, but a consciousness on Jesus' part of the realities which present evangelical theology with its task.

Turning to the resurrection Denney notes that the resurrection appearances are never simply appearances, there is always some charge to the disciples, and this is always in terms of baptism or the remission of sins. Thus ideas of baptism and ideas of the remission of sins interpenetrate each other. Since, in his own teaching, the remission of sins has been connected with his death, baptism must also be linked with his death. So a link is forged between his teaching and the teaching and practice of the rest of the New Testament.

Similar patterns are found in the earliest preaching and writing. In the Acts of the Apostles the death of Christ is seen as a divine necessity (2:23); it is explained by reference to the Servant (3:13; 8:35); forgiveness is offered on the basis of it (2:38; 10:43); and both sacraments are assumed, thus keeping it central in church life. I Peter has only incidental references to the death of Christ, but again they are in terms of sacrifice and sin-bearing (1:1ff; 1:18ff; 2:20f; 3:17f). The chief aim of the references is moral, but the morality is motivated less by example than by gratitude. "Whoever says 'He bore our sins' says substitution; and to say substitution is to say something which involves an immeasurable obligation to Christ, and has therefore in it an incalculable motive power." (Death of Christ p 71f).

In Hebrews the chief themes are priesthood and sacrifice. The interest of the epistle is in man's freedom to approach God, and the death of Christ is seen as establishing an eternal covenant and producing sanctified people. But Denney insists that it is not the

process of sanctification itself which is of first importance; that could be the result of human effort or even of metaphysical influence from the incarnation alone. "... the immediate effect of Christ's death upon men is religious rather than ethical; in technical language it alters their relation to God, or is conceived as doing so, rather than their character. Their character, too, alters eventually, but it is on the basis of that initial and primary religious change; the religious change is not a result of the moral one, nor an unreal abstraction from it." (ibid p 160).

A particular stress in Hebrews is on the finality and completeness of Christ's work. Something is done which never has to be done again. This can only be so if a connection is assumed between sin and death so that His death is in place of ours. The writers "... dominant thought may be said to be that Christ by his death removes sin, as an obstacle standing in our path - bears it away, so that it blocks our road to God no longer - still He does not do this except by dying; in other words, he bears sin away because he bears it; He removes the responsibility of it from us because He takes it upon Himself." (ibid p 166). Again Denney insists that the only suitable term here is substitution. Though Christ is certainly our representative and exemplar this does not go far enough. "It is true that He is our representative; but He not only acts in our name, and in our interest; in His action He does something for us which we could never have done for ourselves, ... this is the evangelical truth that is covered by the word 'substitute', and which is not covered by the word 'representative'" (ibid p 171).

Denney takes the Johannine material together as of one school, though probably not the same hand. The ideas here are different but the central message is the same. In the Apocalypse the death of Christ is a demonstration of God's love which achieves something once for all - he draws attention to the aorists in 1:5, and 5:9. In the characteristic description of Jesus as the 'Lamb' we are again in the context of sacrificial death (5:6-14), and this death has the power to inspire and strengthen martyrs (12:11). "Hence the blood of Christ both does something once for all - in breaking the bond which sin holds us by, and bringing us into such a relation to God that we are

a people of priests - and does something progressively, in assuring our gradual assimilation to Jesus Christ the faithful witness. In both respects the Christian life is absolutely indebted to it." (ibid p 181).

The Gospel has a different tone. As far as the Prologue is concerned Denney admits - reluctantly - that the theme is different from St. Paul. The stress is on revelation rather than redemption. Throughout the Gospel, with its stress on 'truth' and almost philosophical reflection, there is a contrast to the Pauline and synoptic stress on sin and death. Nevertheless, when the influence of the Prologue is not allowed to dominate the rest of the book, one finds many references to the death of Christ. He is the sacrificial sin-bearing lamb (1:29); there are various references to him being raised or lifted up (3:14; 7:28; 12:32); the Good Shepherd lays down his life (10:11); the grain of wheat must die (12:24ff); he lays down his life for his friends (15:13; cf 17:19); and Caiaphas prophecy that one must die for the people is given special solemnity (11:50). Finally the fulness of the Passion narrative emphasises its importance. From all this the cross can be seen as coming from the love of the Father (3:16), and there are frequent references to the necessity of Jesus' death as that which must take place.

I John makes the relationship to sin more explicit, and, because of the nature of the work, there is more stress on the believer's sanctification. There are ideas of sin as a problem to be solved, and of a divine law to be vindicated. In this connection we find the word ἱλασμός (2:2) used of Christ's work. Denney takes it as propitiation, though stressing its connection with the love of God (4:10; 3:16), and finds in it echoes of Paul's ἱλαστήριον in Romans. (Rom 3:25).

In treating the Johannine literature, though the comment fits his attitude over a wider sphere, Denney is keen that the death of Christ should not be 'spiritualised' in a way that robs the actual event of reality and importance. Christianity must be spiritually apprehended, but there must be no depreciation of the historical. "Christianity is as real as the blood of Christ: it is as real as the

agony in the garden and the death on the Cross. It is not less real than this, nor more real; it has no reality whatever which is separable from these historical things. ... It is when that awful experience of Jesus is revealed as a propitiation for sins, an assumption of our responsibilities by One who does right by the eternal law which we have wronged, and does it for us at this tremendous cost; it is then that the soul of man is reached by the divine love, and through penitence and faith drawn away from evil, and born again of God." (ibid p 202f). The reference to a broken law which must be vindicated is a basic theme with Denney.

As Denney treats it the material surveyed above is divided by his treatment of the Pauline literature which he deals with in its canonical place. One cannot escape the conclusion that Denney is most at home with St. Paul and reads the rest of the New Testament from a Pauline standpoint. A most sympathetic critic, H.R. Mackintosh, commented of 'The Death of Christ' that it "... hardly satisfies the careful exegete, for, to put it broadly, it represents the different apostolic writers as all saying exactly the same thing about the Cross, which in fact they do not do. The living variety of interpretation is obscured." (Principal Denney as a Theologian ET Vol XXVIII 1917 p 491). In fact Mackintosh puts it very broadly indeed, for Denney does note different interpretations. However he tends to gloss over them rather quickly. Certainly both in 'Studies in Theology' and 'The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation' he goes straight to St. Paul and merely notes the places in the non-Pauline literature which agree with Paul. Only when he has set himself the task of tracing the subject through the entire New Testament does he do anything like justice to the other strands of interpretation. Yet when the criticism of Paulinism has been allowed, this need not be seen as in any way sinister or partisan. Paul is the great New Testament preacher of reconciliation, the great evangelist. It is not unusual that Denney, overwhelmed by the same concerns, should turn to him.

Perhaps in recognition of the prime importance he was going to give to the Pauline contribution to the subject, Denney gives this

section a long explanatory introduction in which he outlines certain characteristics of Paul's presentation of the cross.

First he notes the assurance with which Paul expresses himself. There is a confidence in the centrality of the cross which in Galatians 1:4, 8f amounts to intolerance. "I cannot," says Denney, agree with those who disparage this, or affect to forgive it as the unhappy beginning of religious intolerance. ... If God has really done something in Christ on which the salvation of the world depends, and if He has made it known, then it is a Christian duty to be intolerant of everything which ignores, denies, or explains it away." (Death of Christ p 78f). Further he argues, it is a sure indication of the essential character of Paul's teaching on the cross that he is intolerant about it. "To touch his teaching here is not to do something which leaves his gospel unaffected; as he understands it, it is to wound his gospel mortally." (ibid p 79).

Secondly he notes that Paul considers the preaching of the cross to be central to the common apostolic Gospel (1 Cor 15:3). He is passing on what he has received as basic. The idea that 'Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures' cannot be dismissed as a mere Paulinism, one idea among many possibilities. Conscious no doubt of the weight he rests upon this foundation, Denney emphasises the importance of the general apostolic agreement on this point in all his treatments of this theme.[1]

Thirdly he argues that there is no evidence of any development of Paul's thought in this matter. In the so-called captivity epistles - Colossians, Ephesians, Philippians - the gospel is exhibited in other relations than those found in the epistles of the great missionary period - Thessalonians, Corinthians, Galatians, Romans, - but there was no basic change. "... the apostle had one message on Christ's death from first to last of his Christian career. His gospel, and it was the only gospel he knew, was always 'The Word of the Cross' (1 Cor 1:18), or 'The Word of reconciliation' (2 Cor 5:19). The application might be infinitely varied, ... but this is not to

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1. cf Studies in Theology p 104; The Death of Christ p 79f; The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation p 171.

say that it was in process of evolution itself." (ibid p 83)

Fourthly it is not possible to argue that as long as the fact of Christ's death is kept the theory is unimportant, or that any theory that fits the present need will do. In this way it could be suggested that Paul's interpretation is only possible for one of his background; or even that it was deliberately invented to cover the church's embarrassment at the fact that Jesus had died a criminal's death.[1] But Denney argues that while the distinction between fact and theory may be useful in some spheres it cannot be made here. It is not possible to preach the death of Christ without some theory of it. "The simplest preacher, and the most effective, is always the most absolutely theoretical. It is a theory, a tremendous theory, that Christ's death is a death for sin. But unless a preacher can put some interpretation on the death - unless he can find a meaning in it which is full of appeal - why should he speak of it at all?" (ibid p 86)

The last preliminary point he makes concerns the connection between the death and resurrection of Christ. He admits that Protestant theology has often concentrated on the death in isolation from the resurrection, which Paul does not do. Yet it would be wrong, in reaction against this, so to stress the resurrection that the death and its importance are lost. Both sides must be kept. "There can be no salvation from sin unless there is a living Saviour: this explains the emphasis laid by the apostle on the resurrection. But the Living One can only be a Saviour because He has died: this explains the emphasis laid on the cross. The Christian believes in a living Lord, or he could not believe at all; but he believes in a living Lord who died an atoning death, for no other can hold the faith of a soul under the doom of sin." (ibid p 87f)

More positively, before turning to consider the epistles, Denney suggests that Paul puts the death of Christ in the context of three relationships. First it is related to the love of God. He notes that some dismiss Paul's doctrine of propitiation as inconsistent with Jesus' teaching on the love of the Father. Such a reaction, he

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1. Rashdall worked out the latter possibility. Denney is not dealing with 'straw men'.

suggests, is too hasty. "It may be a modern, it is certainly not a Pauline idea, that a death for sins, with a view to their forgiveness, is inconsistent with God's love." (ibid p 89). Since Paul sees propitiation as the supreme demonstration of God's love it is at least possible that those who reject it as incompatible with that love have midunderstood him. Later Denney deals at some length with the conception of the righteousness of God.

Secondly the cross must be seen in relation to the love of Christ. Unlike some older exponents of the objective view of atonement, Denney stresses that Christ is the agent, not merely the instrument, of salvation. He redeems men by obedience to the will of God in fulfilling his vocation as redeemer. The cross is the price which he had to pay, and willingly paid, for us men and for our salvation.

Finally, he suggests, one cannot understand Paul's presentation of the death of Christ without seeing it in relation to man's sin and the wrath of God on it. It is a constant theme with Denney, to which we shall return, that Christ's death must be, and must be seen to be, in relation to sin. There is for Paul, and for Denney, a necessary relation between sin and death. This is a difficult train of thought, and, again, it is one to which we must return as it has an important place in Denney's thought. Here it is sufficient to say that he accepts Paul's dictum that 'the wages of sin is death' (Rom 6:23). Man is a moral being bound by a universal law to God. He is not an animal or a plant, and when death comes to him it is not merely a physical end, it is a moral and spiritual experience. "Death is the word which sums up the whole liability of man in relation to sin, and therefore when Christ came to give Himself for our sins He did it by dying." (ibid p 92).

In 'The Death of Christ' Denney works through the Pauline epistles commenting on every verse which refers, or may refer, to Christ's death and its significance for men. But there are three key passages to which he refers on many occasions, which he discusses in detail, and which clearly sum up for him the apostolic teaching on this subject. They are 2 Corinthians 5:14-21; Galatians 3:13f; and Romans 3:21-26. We shall consider them in order.

2 Corinthians 5:14-21. Denney describes this passage as the locus classicus on the death of Christ in Paul's writings. In this epistle Paul is defending his apostleship and his conduct towards the Corinthians. His defence rests on his correct understanding of the Gospel and his success in preaching it. In Chapter 5 he argues that his motives have been to serve God and to benefit those who heard him. He gives as his reason, "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died; and he died for all, that they which live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again." (v14f). Here says Denney, referring back to his introductory points, we have a connection between the love of Christ in which the cross originated and the sin with which it dealt. Further we have a theory which connects the two.

To a certain extent the passage is clear. One could not deny, from this passage, that Paul is moved by the love of Christ, and that that love was shown in Christ's death for all. What is less clear is in what sense he could be said to have died for all, and how this could have such constraining influence on Paul and, so Paul expects, the Corinthians Christians. In other words, what is the theory?

It must be noted that 'for all' translates ὑπὲρ πάντων and 'for their sakes' ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν and that the preposition ὑπὲρ means 'on behalf of' as opposed to ἀντί 'instead of'. Thus, on linguistic grounds, the idea of substitution is not irresistible. The meaning is simply that there is some benefit for all. However, Denney argues that the key to the argument is in the inference which Paul draws from the death of the one - 'therefore all died'. "In one sense, it is irrelevant and interrupts his argument. He puts it into a hurried parenthesis, and then eagerly resumes what it had suspended. ... Yet it is in this immediate inference - that the death of Christ for all involved the death of all - that the missing link is found." (ibid p 101) Here is the source of the constraint. It lies in the immensity of the benefit conferred, He has in some sense died our death. Denney puts the point more sermonically in the Expositors Bible. "... if we all died, in that Christ died for us, there must be a sense in which that death of His is ours; He must be identified with us in it;

there, on the cross, while we stand and gaze at Him, He is not simply a person doing us a service; He is a person doing us a service by filling our place and dying our death." (11 Corinthians p 194f).

This is substitutionary atonement. It is not possible to evade or dilute it by speaking of a mystical union of Christ and the believer. Such an argument might apply to 'crucified with Christ' (Gal 2:20), but there the apostle is speaking of Christian experience. Here there is something prior to such experience. "This clause puts as plainly as it can be put the idea that His death was the death of all; in other words, it was the death of all men which was died by Him." (The Death of Christ p 101f; cf Studies in Theology p 109). If it were not so then it is difficult to see how the cross could have the constraining power which Paul attributes to it.

The same point - the antecedent finished work of Christ, which precedes all Christian experience - is made again in the references to reconciliation in v 18f, "But all things are of God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation." Denney points out that the English verb 'to reconcile' (and the German 'Versöhnen' which is normally taken as its equivalent) has not quite the same meaning as the Greek καταλλάσσειν In normal English the implication is that both parties are necessarily involved. So to say that God has reconciled man to himself implies - in English- that man has entered into a state of peace with God, a reconciled relationship. But the Greek does not go so far, "The work of reconciliation, in the sense of the New Testament, is a work which is finished, and which we must conceive to be finished, before the gospel is preached." (ibid p 103). In other words, God has done something outside of us and without our co-operation into the benefits of which we are now able to enter.

This raises the question why reconciliation was necessary, and how Christ by dying our death could effect it. In his commentary Denney runs rhetorically through the possible reasons why it was

necessary. Since it is God who does the reconciling it may be assumed that the element which made it necessary is on man's side. So he lists man's distrust of God, his dislike, fear, antipathy, spiritual alienation. All these contain some truth, but to put the need for reconciliation here is not to go deep enough. "The serious thing which makes the Gospel necessary, and the putting away of which constitutes the Gospel, is God's condemnation of the world and its sin; it is God's wrath, ..." (11 Corinthians p 212). God takes sin seriously and his wrath is his reaction to it. It is the putting away of this wrath which constitutes the reconciliation.

The result of God's wrath, for man, is death. Paul has shown in v 14f that Christ's death for us affected the removal of this wrath. Now, having noted that God was 'not reckoning unto them their trespasses' (v19), he gives a fuller explanation of how it was effected in v 21. This, says Denney, is Paul's own commentary and explanation of 'One died for all'. "Him who knew no sin he made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in him." It is important to notice that God is the subject of this sentence. It is not to be softened into saying 'Christ became sin', which can then be understood in terms of his willing self-identification with sinners. "... it is God who is presented dealing in an awful way with the awful reality of sin, for its removal; and the way in which he removes it is to lay it on His Son. That is done, not in anything else, but in this alone, that Christ, by God's appointment, dies the sinner's death. The doom falls upon Him, and is exhausted there." (Studies in Theology p 112) Nor has Denney much patience with discussions about the relevance to this passage of the Old Testament sin offering. "The expression for a sin-offering is distinct (περὶ ἁμαρτίας), and the parallelism with δικαιοσύνη in the next clause forbids that reference here. The sin-offering of the Old Testament can at most have pointed towards and dimly suggested so tremendous an utterance as this; and the profoundest word of the New Testament cannot be adequately interpreted by anything in the Old." (11 Corinthians p 219). In any case he frequently makes the point that long and complicated discussions on Old Testament ideas and customs intended to illuminate the New Testament are liable to be confusing as often as helpful. The question is not what certain

words or phrases might have meant in the Old Testament, but how they are used by New Testament writers. In this passage "The idea underlying it is plainly that of an interchange of states." (Studies in Theology p 111).

It may be complained that this argument contains an inner contradiction. God, as it were, appears on both sides of a case at once. Denney admits this, but has no reply except that he does not really regard it as a serious criticism. It is a cool and logical comment without serious existential involvement or concern. We shall note later that he suggests the experience of reconciliation always involves a sense of tension in which God is both for us and against us. Man standing before God was faced with bearing the responsibility and burden of sin. "The message of the Gospel, as it is here presented, is that Christ has borne it for us, if we deny that He can do so, is it not tantamount to denying the very possibility of a Gospel? Mysterious and awful as the thought is, it is the key to the whole New Testament, that Christ bore our sins." (The Death of Christ p 106).

Galatians 3:13f. This passage is treated in his three major works on the subject. He points out that this epistle is more exclusively concerned with the cross than any other New Testament document. The whole of the Christian religion and life is shown to consist in an understanding of and response to the love exhibited in the cross. It is by trusting it fully that man is put right with God and any suggestion that it needs supplementing from the law, or indeed any other source, is to frustrate the grace of God and treat the death of Christ as vain (2:2).

Denney suggests that had Paul been willing to appeal simply to his experience, to say that he had tried to regulate his life by law and found it impossible and so had given it up, and then had explained how through the constraint of God's love in Christ he had found a more satisfactory life, then his gospel would have seemed more attractive than it does to many who have misgivings about what he actually did say. For he does not stay at the empirical level, he goes on to a theory. It is summed up in the expression 'Christ under the law' (4:4)

but the full meaning of the phrase is given in 3:13 'Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:"

The first difficulty here is the precise meaning of the term law. The obvious meaning as Paul wrote was the Jewish law. But if that was all then this would be limited to an 'ad hominem' argument which could not be used except in a situation in which an attempt at justification through the observance of the Jewish law could really be presented as a live option. Denney is not willing to accept this limitation. While in the accidental circumstances of the epistle the Jewish law is prominent, he argues that the meaning is more general, "... it is law in the large sense of the ethical necessities which determine all the relations of God and man. For law in this large sense Paul had the profoundest reverence. He knew that it could never be treated as though it were not, not even by God, and not even in the act of forgiveness." (The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation p 167).

But if the wider meaning is accepted it is still not possible to stop when one has said that Christ was 'under the law', since the phrase is ambiguous. As far as the law of God comes to man as an imperative telling him what he must do to please God, then it is of course true that Christ, as truly human, was 'under the law' as every other man is. But this would not be enough to secure man's redemptiion. Hence Denney goes on, "The law has not only a relation to man as such, in which it expresses the will of God; it has a relation to men as sinners, in which it expresses the condemnation of God. Now Christ is our Redeemer, according to the apostle, because He was made under the law in this sense." (Death of Christ p 112). It is this which is made plain in Galatians 3:13.

With the wider understanding of law he rejects the argument that 'curse' here is to be identified with the cross on the basis of Deuteronomy 21:23 "... he that is hanged is accursed of God ...". It seems to imply that had Jesus died in some other way Paul would not have been able to use this quotation, and that our condemnation would not have come upon him. No doubt it was because of the crucifixion

that this verse came easily to Paul's mind, but it was Jesus' death, rather than any particular form of death, that was the acceptance of the curse. "Death is the curse of the law. It is the experience in which the final repulsion of evil by God is decisively expressed; and Christ died. In His death everything was made His that sin had made ours - everything in sin except its sinfulness." (ibid p 115). The analogy of other New Testament uses of the Old Testament supports Denney here. While Jesus' riding into Jerusalem on an ass declares him to be king in fulfilment of Zechariah 9:9, and his death between two thieves is taken as fulfilment of 'he was numbered with the transgressors' in Isaiah 53:12, it could not seriously be argued that had he not ridden the ass or been crucified between the thieves the New Testament writers could not have considered him king or to have died for sinners. Similarly here the curse refers to the death rather than the manner of the death.

Yet Denney is keen to point out that Paul avoids applying to Christ the exact words of the text in Deuteronomy 'accursed of God'. To have done so would be misleading. Jesus was not accursed of His Father; he was doing the Father's will in becoming accursed, taking the curse of death, for us. Denney did not present a picture of the loving Son wresting redemption from an angry or reluctant Father. He would have accepted Forsyth's statement of the case, that the grace of God provided the cross, it was not procured by it.

Romans 3:21-26 This becomes the most important of Denney's three key passages. Its growing importance can be traced through his writings. In 'Studies in Theology' (1894) it is dealt with in less than two pages. In 'The Death of Christ' (1902) it gets fuller treatment in ten sides with references to the work of other interpreters. Yet here, as in the previous work, it still seems to have what one might call a subordinate role supporting the position arrived at from 2 Corinthians 5:14-21. But by the end of his life in 'The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation' (1917) practically the whole of his treatment of the Pauline view of the subject, some thirty sides, is given to these verses. By then, however, he is not simply concerned with the exegetical problem of bringing out what Paul said or meant, he is also concerned with what might be called - though probably not

by Denney - the hermeneutical problems of putting it in terms which would be acceptable, or at least understandable, to his contemporaries. Meanwhile he had also covered the passage in his Expositors Greek Testament Commentary on Romans (1900). For the moment we are chiefly interested in his understanding of Paul.

The preceding chapters of Romans have concluded all men under sin and in need of a righteousness which, of themselves or by way of the law, they are unable to obtain. Again Denney is understanding law in the wider sense indicated above. The question of the epistle is then 'How can sinful men be righteous before God?'. The Gospel, as explained in these verses, brings Paul's answer to that question. A righteousness of God is made available to the sinner by God by the means of setting forth His son as a propitiation. There are two problems, the precise meaning of δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ and of ἱλαστήριον.

The problem with δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ is whether it refers to God's character - that He is himself righteous, his passive righteousness, or whether it is a more technical term for the Gospel - his action in setting men right, his active righteousness. I think that most modern commentators accept that the two cannot be rigidly separated, they are aspects of the same thing not quite different and independent possibilities. Thus it might seem that Denney makes rather heavy weather of the problem, especially in '<u>The Death of Christ</u>' (cf pp 120-125). But no doubt in his day the other possibilities he suggests were live options. He suggests that some take the phrase to mean simply God's self-imparting goodness, while others refer it to his acting rightly in the context of the covenant, or in accordance with his own nature. Exponents of these views say a lot that is true, but they do not see the problem with which Denney sees Paul is grappling. The problem that if God takes sin seriously the plight of men is hopeless, they are exposed to the wrath of God; but if God does not take sin seriously and <u>simply</u> forgives freely, then man can have no confidence in the character of God. Furthermore, such views have not taken seriously the significance of ἱλαστήριον.

The solution, according to Denney, is to understand the righteousness of God in two senses coming to a climax at the end of

the passage with God both just in himself (Passive Righteousness), and the justifier of the ungodly (Active Righteousness). The key is in the idea of ἱλαστήριον He dismisses the idea that it could mean 'mercy seat' as in Exodus 25:16, as incongrous with the context and out of keeping with the apostle's thought. Neither does he feel it is necessary to make it a neuter adjective and supply a noun, say θῦμα. It is probably not possible to come to a conclusion on the grammatical question. It is sufficient to see the propitiatory efficacy of Christ's blood. "It is not necessary to assume that any particular sacrifice - say the sin-offering - is in view; ... it is enough to say that for the Apostle the ideas of blood with propitiatory virtue, and sacrificial blood must have been the same, ..." (Romans p 611). Thus the two aspects of God's righteousness, active and passive, are both kept. "There can be no gospel unless there is such a thing as the righteousness of God for the ungodly. But just as little can there be any gospel unless the integrity of God's character be maintained." (The Death of Christ p 119).

This interpretation keeps both the freedom of God's action and the necessary connection between Christ's death and man's sin. In his death the divine judgement on sin is met. Thus the passage is seen to be in line with the others we have studied. Forgiveness is offered freely to men, but at great cost to God who, in the death of his son, met the demands of the law. "I do not", wrote Denney, "know any word which conveys the truth of this if 'vicarious' or substitutionary' does not, nor do I know any interpretation of Christ's death which enables us to regard it as a demonstration of love to sinners, if this vicarious or substitutionary character is denied." (ibid p 126).

In these passages Denney believes he has found and set forth the heart of the Gospel. He knows that not all would agree, and that some would dismiss such passages rather impatiently as not central to the New Testament, contradictory to a simpler and purer message of God's free love, or relative to a world view or attitude to the Jewish law that mankind has long since outgrown. Such criticisms did not simply touch his Biblical exegesis, they went to the heart of his faith and the truths he held most dear. Thus he responded to such criticisms with vehement eloquence. "I think it worth while to draw

attention to the fact that a theology which treats ... (the passages above) ... as mere excresences on the gospel, or even on the Pauline gospel, is utterly at variance with the New Testament. It is in passages like these that the Christian consciousness in all ages has found the very core of the gospel, the inmost heart of God's redeeming love; they have been the refuge of despairing sinners from generation to generation; they are not 'faults', as a geologist would say, in the structure of Christian thought; they are not erratic boulders that have been carried over somehow from a pre-Christian - i.e. a Jewish or pagan - condition of mind, to a Christian one; they are themselves the most profoundly, purely, and completely Christian of all scripture thoughts. The idea they contain is not an irrational or immoral something that we must eliminate by one device or another - by exegetical ingenuity, or philosophical interdict; it is the diamond pivot of which the whole system of Christian truth revolves, and to displace it or tamper with it is to reduce the New Testament t o an intellectual chaos." (Studies in Theology p 108f).

Yet such vehemence could not take the place of argument, and from the publication of 'The Death of Christ' onwards his writings are chiefly an attempt to explain, defend and commend the exegetical results he had stated there.

We noticed above the complex double-sided nature of his attitude to the orthodox formulae of objective atonement. Admitting the danger of externality, and welcoming the greater use of human and personal analogies, he was equally convinced that this should not lead to an abandoning of the objective element which he considered to be the main New Testament teaching.

The lectures published as 'The Death of Christ' were intended as an exposition of this teaching. Before their publication he wrote to his friend W. Robertson Nicoll, "There is nothing in them but an exhibition of the New Testament teaching; but the centrality and gravity and inevitableness and glory of it impressed me more than ever, and I think it worth insisting on. The epistles deduce everything Christian from it, theological and ethical; and there is no choice

but to take it or leave it." (Letters of Principal James Denney to W. Robertson Nicoll p 24f). In spite of the last sentence he seems to have been genuinely surprised at the reception the book received. It seems that he had, perhaps rather naively, expected the New Testament teaching, as he saw it, to commend itself more easily than it did, at least within the church. He had paid some attention to opinions other than his own, and made some attempt to explain the Pauline ideas in modern terms. But the correspondence which followed, particularly when he was congratulated or criticised for having put forward 'forensic' or 'judicial' views, convinced him of the need to show much more clearly to the modern mind how those ideas were to be understood and the background against which they should be set.

When he turned to the 'Modern Mind' he picked out three chief features which he considered had fashioned its outlook. The development of the sciences, particularly biology, could, he thought, be a helpful factor for the evangelist or apologist in at least one direction. Against the sheer individualism which had been current for some time it stressed the essential unity of mankind and the connection between man and the rest of nature, both of which were, for Denney, presuppositions of the Doctrine of Atonement. Less helpfully, in giving purely physical explanations of all phenomena, particularly those of conscience, science was contributing to the loss of the consciousness of sin and of individual moral responsibility. Secondly he noted the prevalence of idealist philosophy, with its tendency to stress the unity of God and man and accordingly reduce the uniqueness of Christ. As the sense of distance between man and God was lost, men no longer saw the need for a mediator. Not the least difficulty with idealism was the tendency to use Christian phraseology but without, as Denney saw it, the full Christian meaning. Finally he noted the current stress on historical study. Here the danger was to see everything as relative to its own time, and so to deny the possibility of any historical period or events having eternal significance. Even in the church some distinguished a purely historical interpretation of the death of Jesus - He was put to death by his enemies, from a dogmatic one - he died for our sins. We have seen Denney's criticism of this sort of thing. For him the event needs, and has an interpretation, an uninterpreted event is not possible.

But he saw that the 'Modern Mind' also made legitimate demands on a doctrine of atonement. It insisted that truth should be verified in experience and be ethically construed. His own theology met these demands. The evangelist in him, never far below the surface, warmed to an appeal to experience providing it was a deep enough experience and not superficial emotion. Furthermore he insisted that, properly understood, the experience of reconciliation led to sanctification. But, in contrast to some others, he insisted that this meant dealing adequately with man's relation to God. Thus he can both criticise some representations of the objective view, and at the same time commend the moral depth and earnestness which he connected with it. "Sometimes this aspect of reconciliation is not adequately recognised. The term is restricted too narrowly to a transaction in the sphere of conscience. But the end of reconciliation is to make saints, and no life impresses us as saintly unless it reflects, however obscurely, the glory of the beatitudes. We are not really reconciled to God through Jesus unless we are reconciled to this as the true life, and we are not reconciled to this as the true life unless we are reconciled to renouncing all the passion with which when we were ignorant of it we sought the chief end of life elsewhere." (The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation p 12).

This introduces us to a basic assumption of his thought. He saw man as a creature made for personal relationship with God, and seemed unable to consider any other possibility. Writing of the 'New Theology' of R.J. Campbell, which he took to be pantheist, he said, "Nothing ever impressed me so much, as an argument for theism, as the first verse of the 139th Psalm. A man is incapable of judging anything if he does not feel that it expresses the most real experience of which human nature is capable. Thou hast searched me, and known me - and if he does not feel that the thou is just as real and as personal as the me. Only God can prove His being and His personality and His character to man, and He proves all three, in the first instance, by experiences like this." (Letters of Principal James Denney to W. Robertson Nicoll p 80). This is axiomatic. He never wrote anything which might be considered an apologia towards atheism. A personal relationship with, or at least an awareness of, God he takes to be a fact of experience to anyone who has seriously considered his own existence.

The relations between God and man must also be seen as moral. It is in this sense he speaks of a necessity resting upon God, and this is most important for his understanding of atonement. In his dealings with men God also is governed by law, that general law which Denney expounded in his treatment of Galatians 3:13 and Romans 3:21ff. His concern here is to keep the integrity of God, and also to show that man can be confident in his dealings with God.

Denney's use of law, particularly his application of it to God, has been criticised and perhaps misunderstood. We saw that he repudiates what are generally called 'legal' or 'judicial' approaches to atonement. The relations between God and man are not regulated by statute as are those between a judge and a criminal. But it is not enough to replace the analogy of judge and criminal by that of parent and child. "If the sinner is not a criminal before his judge, neither is he a naughty child before a parent whose own weakness or affinity to evil introduces an incalculable element into his dealing with his child's fault. ... It ought to be apparent to everyone that even the relation of parent and child, if it is to be a moral relation, must be determined in a way which has universal and final validity." (Atonement and the Modern Mind p 272f). To speak of relations as in this sense under law, and even to bring God under this law, is not the same thing as to say that they are legal and thus impersonal. It is rather to make them sure. The alternative would seem to be to declare God to be without law, which is presumably not seriously suggested. "The relations of God to man therefore are not capricious though they are personal: they are reflected or expressed in a moral constitution to which all personal beings are equally bound, a moral constitution of eternal and universal validity, which neither God nor man can ultimately treat as anything else than what it is." (ibid p 271)[1]

It is in this context that sin is seen not just as a breach of law, but as a breach of relationship. Man is estranged from God. No good end is served by speculating about how this estrangement came

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1. If Denney's careful use of 'law', and his holding together of 'personal' and 'legal' analogies, is noted, he seems to have anticipated and met most of the criticisms which Dillistone has made of the use of 'legal' conceptions of atonement. cf F.W. Dillistone: The Christian Understanding of Atonement p 203-215.

about or theorising on the 'unfallen' state of Adam. As a matter of fact man 'knows' himself to be in a wrong relation with God and in need of reconciliation. The consciousness of being wrong with God may come to the surface of man's mind through some particular act, but what is basically involved is a condition of sinfulness or estrangement. Man is conscious of a bad conscience, a sense of responsibility before God. It might seem that what is needed is repentance, but man comes to see that his state of sin is such that he cannot adequately repent. Thus there is a sense of being bound in a relationship with God; an awareness that the relationship is wrong; and an inability either to escape from the relationship or to put it right oneself.

Denney writes often and at length on this subject. He regrets that the 'Modern Mind' either fails to realise its own position or is content with superficial panaceas, believing that repentance is not only possible but easy. He writes, "This sense of being wrong with God, under His displeasure, excluded from His fellowship, afraid to meet Him yet bound to meet Him, is the sense of guilt. Conscience confesses in it its liability to God, a liability which in the very nature of the case it can do nothing to meet, and which therefore is nearly akin to despair." (ibid p 279). Elsewhere perhaps more forcibly, "At a primitive stage of advancement, indeed, just as in childhood, men repent of what they have done; but at a more mature stage they repent of what they are. At first they feel that they must make amends; but when they come to know themselves, they feel that they must be born again." (Studies in Theology p 83f). It is in this sense, he suggests, that we must understand the traditional language about man's total depravity.

However, important though the individual relationship with God is, it is by no means all. There is a social and organic aspect of sin which involves the entire race. It tells on the entire society. All men live in a society and effect that society by their actions, just as they are affected by it. This has obvious implications for the doctrine of atonement. "We become conscious that the individual cannot be reconciled to God except by a reconciliation in which the interest of all his fellows is identical with his own." (The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation p 192). This puts the doctrine on a far

wider canvas, showing that it must involve a far greater work than we might at first have imagined.

This also raises one of the most intractible problems involved in the doctrine of grace. How far is the individual responsible for his sins, and how far can he even hope for redemption? The corporate conscience and the corporate nature of guilt could be used by the individual as an excuse. He could blame his own sins upon his environment or heredity. At its extreme this leads to one aspect of the controversy between Augustine and Pelagius.

In the last resort, Denney suggests, one can only appeal to moral experience and assert that each is right in what he asserts but wrong in what he denies. The antinomy runs as deep as our moral consciousness. Augustine is right to insist that man's very nature needs to be renewed. We have just seen that Denney is convinced man cannot make amends, and that spiritually sensitive and mature man knows that he needs rebirth. Yet it is equally axiomatic to our moral consciousness that we cannot evade responsibility for our sins. Pelagius and his followers were right to oppose any view which encourages man, even if only by implication, to opt out of the moral struggle.

In his earlier work he seems to feel for a solution which will do justice to the problem in a fairly neat and well rounded way. Acknowledging a debt to Dale, he wrote "The inherited bias may be strong, but it is not everything that is in any man's nature, and it is only when he ignores or renounces the relation to God, and freely make the evil inheritance his own, that he makes it into a condemnation, and puts it between himself and life. What we inherit, strictly speaking, may be said to be our trial, but not our fate." (Studies in Theology p 91). The need to insist that man remains redeemable he always kept. But, though the distinction between trial and fate re-appears, in his last work he seems more content simply to state both sides of the paradox with no attempt to resolve them. "Our whole nature is involved in sin, but not indistinguishably and irretrievably involved, and we disown the sin and protest against it even when we feel ourselves most hopelessly its slaves. On this

the need and the possibility of redemption depend." (The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation p 198). And later in the same discussion, "We know immediately and at first hand the only things which are of any consequence: that sin is rooted in our nature so deeply, is so congenital and powerful, that we cannot save ourselves; and on the other hand, that God has made us for Himself, and has never left Himself without a witness in our consciences, so that the possibility and hope of reconciliation are not precluded." (ibid p 200).

This leads to the third and perhaps most difficult aspect of his thinking about sin. From being individual it must be extended not only to society but to the natural world. Belief in God as creator rules out any sharp division between the moral or spiritual and the physical worlds. Sin affects man's relation to the physical world. Nature is not simply a neutral stage for moral struggle. As part, with man, of God's creation it also has been affected by sin. But it is also the organ and ally of God. "The universe is a system of things in which good can be planted and in which it will bear fruit; it is also a system of things in which there is a ceaseless and unrelenting reaction against evil." (ibid p 202)

Denney admits this is a difficult conception with which to work. It is always likely to slip into pantheism. Yet he insists, though it may only be possible to state it poetically or imaginatively, it must be stated. The distinction between moral or spiritual on the one hand, and natural or physical on the other, may be useful for discussion, but in fact man is a unity. Sin involves the whole man in whom spirit and nature interpenetrate. "There is a moral constitution, ... even of the physical world; and though it is impossible for us to work it out in detail, the assumption of it is the only assumption on which we can understand the life of a being related as man is related both to the natural and the spiritual." (Atonement and the Modern Mind p 282). He takes this for granted, explaining that while he does not pretend there is articulate reflection on it in the Old or New Testaments it is tacitly assumed in both.

Thus man, out of his proper relationship with God, is also out

of step with the very nature of life and the world itself. The inevitable reaction of the constitution of things against sin means that man not only needs to be reconciled to God but to life itself. The chief point Denney wishes to draw from this line of thought is the establishing of the Biblical connection between sin and death. 'The wages of sin is death' (Rom 6:23). This is the awful final assertion of the reaction of God's entire creation against sin.

Denney is aware that this connection would not be easy for the contemporary mind. Death is never a popular subject. At the time he wrote it was generally left in the domain of biology. The human being was a complex living machine which grew, grew old, wore out in the process of time and eventually died. In this sense death is merely a natural physical event. Denney did not deny this physical explanation. Neither did he deny that many people would not, or could not, look beyond it. However he pointed out that it was a limited view and certainly not a Biblical one. It was true that the account of the origin of death in Genesis 3 was mythological. But, he argued, mythology is not nonsense, it is rather a profound statement of truths beyond normal expression. This myth enshrines the truth that man is not simply natural like an animal or plant. He is also a spiritual being and in fact, as we have seen, it is the division of the two which is unreal. Holding them together Denney argued that death was more than a physical event, it was a spiritual experience. The tendency to make light of death was simply not true to experience. "In the most happy or the most glorious conditions, the death of a spiritual being has an inevitable indignity and humiliation in it; we feel it is revoltingly out of keeping in a nature akin to God." (The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation p 279).

The horror of death is an indication of the seriousness in God's sight of the sin from which it results. In death we see what is always true of sin - that it lies under the wrath of God. It is this wrath which man senses, though dimly, in his sense of guilt before God, "His condemnation of sin, His wrath repelling sin, resting over sin, are not figments of our ignorance and fear; they are absolutely real things, to which our conscience bears a true though awfully inadequate testimony." (Studies in Theology p 94). Denney suspected

that many of his contemporaries were rather too easily persuaded that man's sense of sin was the result of an ignorance that was now being outgrown. He wished to recall them to a more Biblical position. God's wrath and condemnation of the sinful world, he suggests "... are not, whatever speculative theologians may think, unreal things: neither do they belong only to ancient times. They are the most real things of which human nature has any knowledge till it receives the reconciliation. They are as real as a bad conscience; as real as misery, impotence, and despair." (11 Corinthians p 213). Only a shallow sophistication, or a proud confidence in man's lack of need, can take these things lightly. But they are not intellectually discerned. Such conceptions are only likely to have power among men who are genuinely concerned about their relationship to God. To such people, he asserts in a striking metaphor 'death is the sacrament of sin'. "... the connection of sin and death in scripture ... is a profound conviction and experience of the human conscience, and all that is of interest is to show that such a conviction and experience can never be set aside by the protest of those who aver that they know nothing about it." (Atonement and the Modern Mind p 288).

It is against this background that we must set the need and work of reconciliation. How are the severed relations between man and God to be restored in a way which does justice to the reality of sin and to the awfulness of God's wrath? It is accepted that this reconciliation comes through the work of Christ, and Denney gives an outline of the history of the doctrine.[1] As we have seen on several occasions he agrees it had become too formal and external. Satisfaction had been equated with punishment; the stress had been exclusively on Christ's death, ignoring his life; the subjective response had been neglected; there was inconsistency in that while God was said to forgive freely it was also asserted that he had been paid; there was a false division of the attributes of God which normally led to an opposition between his justice and mercy. Denney thought these objections could be overcome and that the traditional formulae kept important truths. Nevertheless, the objections were formidable.

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1. cf The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation pp 97-115.

He notes that in face of these objections certain inadequate doctrines of atonement had been suggested. Some concentrated on the incarnation rather than the death of Christ. We have already noted part of his objection to this line of thinking.[1] In taking attention from the death of Christ it risked making his life unnecessary too since all that needs to be done, the taking of humanity into Godhead, or the infusing of humanity by Godhead, has been done by his birth, though advocates of this view do not always recognise this. This view also shifts the centre of gravity of the New Testament. While the incarnation may be the thought around which everything gravitates in the Nicene Creed and the church which produced it, that is not the case with the New Testament. There, as he believes he has shown, the cross is central. "Not Bethlehem, but Calvary, is the focus of revelation, and any construction of Christianity which ignores or denies this distorts Christianity by putting it out of focus." (The Death of Christ p 235f). Furthermore to make the incarnation central in this way is to replace morals by metaphysics. A man who is concerned about his sins and his standing before God does not need to be lectured on the ontological relations of Godhead and manhood. Finally, this approach tends to sentimentalise Christianity as the Christmas celebrations in many churches show, "... they are an appeal to anything and everything in man except that to which the Gospel is designed to appeal. The New Testament is just as little sentimental as it is metaphysical: it is ethical not metaphysical; passionate, not sentimental." (ibid p 237).

Others suggested that all that was needed was for God to forgive, to offer a kind of universal amnesty. It was frequently pointed out that in the parable of the Prodigal Son there was no complicated 'machinery' of atonement. The loving Father was waiting and ready to receive the repentance of the son with no qualifications or questions. This, it was argued, was Jesus' essential message, reflected in his attitude to sinners during his ministry. From this point of view the death of Christ was simply the inevitable result of his courage in preaching this message among sinful, religious, men.

It would be hard to imagine a presentation of the atonement with

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1. cf p 36 above.

which Denney would have had less sympathy. Not that he saw no truth in it at all, but rather that it appeared so superficial and incomplete. One senses that he is hardly able to understand how it could seriously be put forward as an answer to the need for atonement. He points out that a theology based simply on the parable of the Prodigal Son would have no place for Jesus either, and that that parable is designed simply to show the freeness of pardon from man's side, whereas the doctrine of atonement is concerned with the cost to God and the particular way in which he bore that cost. For Denney, and for his understanding of the New Testament, that cost was primarily the cross. Those who spoke of God merely forgiving had not given enough thought to the maintenance of God's righteousness or to the costliness of forgiveness as these were presented in the New Testament.[1]

In his earlier works he passes straight from a criticism of these inadequate doctrines of atonement, as he sees them, to an objective view, and to support it from the New Testament. In his last work, though the outcome is the same, he approaches more gradually, taking account of the ministry of Jesus as well as his death and dwelling at some length on the concept of forgiveness. As we have seen,he notes that the entire life of Jesus had a reconciling effect, and refers to the sinful woman (Luke 7:36-50) and to Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1ff). Such people were brought by Jesus very presence and manner to repentance and were forgiven. But he points out that even in purely human terms a forgiveness which is offered freely is not without cost to the one who offers it.

He gives examples of forgiveness in human experience, pointing out that the initiative in restoring a broken relationship by means of forgiveness lies with the one who was wronged. This can be seen in the case of a father wronged by his son, or a wife by her husband, but in neither case will a mere announcement of forgiveness without cost to the forgiver suffice. "It is the plain truth that everyone who knows, even in human relations what it is to forgive or to be forgiven,

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1. Interestingly Forsyth has an extended treatment of the parable of the 'Prodigal Son' as an answer to the problem of atonement which seems to owe a lot to Denney. cf P.T. Forsyth: 'The Work of Christ' p 106ff.

knows also that it is the most costly and tragic of all experiences." (The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation p 135). The offence which caused the breach in the relationship is not just ignored, it is paid for. One result of such an experience is the sense of debt on the part of the one forgiven.

All this supports the position which Denney had previously set out from the New Testament. God's forgiveness cannot be easier or cheaper than human forgiveness, rather, as the breach is greater so the cost may be expected to be greater. The cost is the death of Christ. Only if his death is seen in this way is the reality of man's sin taken with proper seriousness. "... in perfect sinlessness He consents even to die, to submit to that awful experience in which the final reaction of God's holiness against sin is expressed. Death was not His due: it was something alien to One who did nothing amiss; but it was our due, and because it was ours He made it His. It was thus that He made Atonement. He bore our sins." (The Atonement and the Modern Mind p 301).

Later he discusses the term penal substitution. He is not happy with its legalistic overtones. Punishment, he considers, can only exist in and for a bad conscience. While the innocent may suffer for, and in the place of, the guilty, he remains innocent. Thus he wishes to exclude the idea that "... the Son of God, with whom the Father was well pleased, should be regarded at the same time as the object of the Father's displeasure, the victim of His wrath, on whom the punishment of all the world's sin was inflicted." (The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation p 262). We have seen that in dealing with Galatians 3:13 he pointed out that Paul did not say that God cursed Jesus. Nevertheless, he does not want to let the term go completely. The sufferings of Jesus involved taking seriously the reality of sin and the wrath of God. The Christian conscience through the ages has always found there the heart of the Gospel, and has seen there God's treatment of sin at its worst, while paradoxically trying to preserve the innocence of Jesus and the relations of the Trinity. In the last resort Denney can do no more than accept this paradox. "... can we," he asks, "say anything else than this: that while the agony and the Passion were not penal in the sense of

coming upon Jesus through a bad conscience, or making Him the personal object of divine wrath, they were penal in the sense that in that dark hour He had to realise to the full the divine reaction against sin in the race in which He was incorporated, and that without doing so to the uttermost He could not have been the Redeemer of that race from sin, or the Reconciler of sinful men to God?" (ibid p 273). Thus it is that the sense of indebtedness to Christ is such a major feature of New Testament Christianity, and also, Denney would argue, or genuine Christianity in any subsequent age.

That this line of thinking can be put, and often has been put, crudely and mechanistically, should not be allowed to weigh against it too heavily. Here, as in the sense of tension in which God seems to be both for us and against us at the same time, we are dealing with the deepest human experiences. The experience must be held even if the expression of it lacks sophistication. It does not follow that we need to speak of a division between the justice and the mercy of God. The opposite of justice is injustice, not mercy. God remains just, and shows his justice chiefly in showing mercy. "It is certainly part of the experience of reconciliation that God treats us better than we deserve. He does not deal with us after our sins, nor reward us according to our iniquities. ... But it is not part of the experience to feel that there is a conflict between the divine attributes of justice and mercy, ... they are in active and immutable harmony with each other, and God always - not merely in forgiving sins - acts in unison with both." (ibid p 22).

A further unusual line which Denney follows here is to argue that God is also affected by the act of Christ. It is true that the New Testament always sees God as the subject of reconciliation, but the point of such language is to stress his initiative. It is wrong to suppose that he was not changed. "When we say that because God is love, immutably and eternally love, therefore He does not need to be and cannot be reconciled, we are imputing immutability to God in a sense which practically denies that He is the living God. If sin makes a difference to God - and that it does is the solemn fact which makes reconciliation of interest to us - then God is not immutable, and His love is not immutable, in the sense assumed."

(ibid p 237). Those who protest against any idea of God being reconciled to man seem to see him as an unmoving 'summum bonum'. In human experience there is a difference between the readiness to forgive and the actual opportunity of exercising forgiveness and moving into a reconciled relationship. May it not be, therefore, that there is a difference to God when his forgiveness is made actual by the work of Christ?[1]

As we have often noted, for Denney the best expression available for that work is 'substitution'. He finds the word 'representative' which is often suggested as an improvement is too open to misunderstanding. It has the implication that Christ is somehow 'put forward' by the human race, rather than the more Biblical conception of his being 'given' by God. Thus the sense of man's debt to God is weakened. Though, following reconciliation, when men are reconciled, it may be said that he is our representative.

Not the least advantage of the idea of 'substitution' for Denney is that it can be preached. It does not follow that the preacher will always begin at the cross. Men may be attracted to Jesus in many ways, but wherever in the Gospel story one begins, one will inevitably be led to the cross. It is the one who can, and does, pay this price that can offer reconciliation to sinners.

In this vein he gives a long illustration from Kierkegaard[2] in which man's approach to God is traced through the stages of growth to maturity. The child who 'says Du to the Kaiser as he does to his nurse' finds nothing odd in regarding God as his heavenly Father and probably has no ideas about Christ at all. The youth is pleased to

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1. Interestingly, all the scholars covered in this work make some criticism of the doctrine of Divine impassibility.

2. Denney read Kierkegaard before he was generally known in England. In 1905 he asked Robertson Nicoll whether there would be any interest in a book of selections from Kierkegaard translated by Dr. Grieve, and commented that he had himself thought of translating the study of Abraham's sacrifice from the German. He thinks the journal would be interesting, but adds "His more formal works do not seem to me likely to have any vogue in this country. They are as much eccentric as original, and with sober minds a little paradox goes a long way." (Letters of Principal James Denney to W. Robertson Nicoll p 55).

accept Christ as friend and example but feels no greater need. But the mature man, with greater insight brought about by closer acquaintance with Christ and fuller recognition of his own state, comes to a more existential understanding of his need of reconciliation and his consequent debt to Christ. (cf Death of Christ pp 216-218)

Once that need is seen the idea of 'substitution' can be seen to stand in relation to it as other theories do not. He makes this point in an illustration which deserves to be quoted at length. "If I were sitting on the end of the pier, on a summer day, enjoying the sunshine and the air, and someone came along and jumped into the water and got drowned 'to prove his love for me', I should find it quite unintelligible. I might be much in need of love, but an act in no rational relation to any of my necessities could not prove it. But if I had fallen over the pier and were drowning, and some one sprang into the water, and at the cost of making my peril, or what but for him would be my fate, his own, saved me from death, then I should say, 'Greater love hath no man than this.' I should say it intelligibly, because there would be an intelligible relation between the sacrifice which love made and the necessity from which it redeemed. Is it making any rash assumption to say that there must be such an intelligible relation between the death of Christ - the great act in which His love to sinners is demonstrated - and the sin of the world for which in His blood He is the propitiation? I do not think so. Nor have I yet seen any intelligible relation established between them except that which is the key to the whole of New Testament teaching, and which bids us say, as we look at the Cross, He bore our sins, He died our death. It is so His love constrains us." (ibid p 127)[1]

We must now ask how Denney sees the benefits of Christ's death coming to man. In fact he writes surprisingly little on the 'means of grace'. He seems to have considered it to be his task to elucidate the meaning of reconciliation. The application he seems to regard as

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1. Hastings Rashdall criticised this illustration for failing to do justice either to the view it attacked or the one it defended. These criticisms will be taken up in the next chapter.

self-evident. Such help as he gives is largely incidental and is covered by one important rubric - nothing in this sphere is made plain to observers. Only those who approach the subject in earnest, concerned about their soul's eternal destiny, are likely to understand. And such people, he implies, need no explanation.

The task of the evangelist is to preach Christ - a living and ascended Christ, but a Christ who was crucified and has thus dealt with the sin of the world. He is to preach 'Jesus in His death'. This evangelistic message becomes effective through faith. Denney is keen to keep the living moral content in faith. He strongly repudiates the view that Paul had two gospels, a simple juridical one and a fuller ethico-mystical one. In this vein Weiss argued that the doctrine of justification by faith alone is supplemented in Paul's theology by a doctrine of spiritual regeneration through a mystical union with Christ established by baptism. Ritschl made a similar distinction, though he saw the two as parallel rather than successive. Denney is impatient with such distinctions. They do not do justice to the force of Paul's thought or its relation to reality, "... there is nothing in any Christian experience answering to this dead or inert justification by faith, which has no relation to the new life, nor again is there anything in Christian experience like this new life which is added by baptism to the experience of justification by faith, but does not spring out of it." (ibid p 129). Faith is, for Denney, the total characterisation of the Christian life. It is not a work, neither is it something which belongs merely to the beginning of the Christian life. "Faith fills the New Testament as completely as Christ does; it is the correlative of Christ wherever Christ really touches the life of men. ... And there is nothing superficial in what the New Testament calls faith, ... on the contrary, faith exhausts in itself the being of man in this direction; it is his absolute commital of himself for ever to the sin bearing love of God for salvation. It is not simply the act of an instant, it is the attitude of a life; it is the one right thing at the moment when a man abandons himself to Christ, and it is the one thing which keeps him right with God for ever." (The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation pp 287f, 291). It is as pointless to speak of adding anything to faith as it is to speak of adding anything to Christ.

The result of such faith is assurance. On several occasions he contrasts the Roman and Protestant attitudes to assurance. For Rome assurance of salvation seems presumptuous. The believer must always be looking to the quality of his moral life and seeking the help of the church to maintain his position before God. This, says Denney, is understandable as a check against self-deception, but it is a departure from the New Testament. He quotes at length the seventh chapter of the sixth session of the Council of Trent on the subject of Justification, and comments that the underlying conception of faith - acceptance of teaching - is not the same as the New Testament conception of complete abandonment to Christ. This is made clear by the references to the additions which have to be made to faith. The complementary teaching on grace as something which can be lodged bodily in the soul has also moved from the New Testament conception. There we find "Grace is the attitude of God to man which is revealed and made sure in Christ, and the only way in which it becomes effective in us for new life is when it wins for us the response of faith." And the response, "... is not a part of the Christian life but the whole of it. It does not need to be, and cannot be supplemented or eked out by 'gifts' and 'graces'. All gifts and graces are where Christ is, and faith is the indivisible acceptance of them all in Him" (ibid p 301f)

But the Protestant view has often been equally at variance with the New Testament. In Protestantism the attempt to check presumption and safeguard morality has often led to assurance being made dependent on correct belief, or belief of a certain intensity. But all such qualifications are foreign to the New Testament and are, in fact, symptomatic of a different atmosphere. However important morality may be, however understandable the desire to assure that justification is accompanied by sanctification, this is not the way to safeguard either. Denney often quotes with approval the remark of Chalmers 'What could I do if God did not justify the ungodly?' The fact is that God offers assurance of salvation to sinners, and this assurance itself is the best guarantee of morality and future holiness. "To try to take some preliminary security for the sinner's future morality before you make the gospel available for him is not only to strike at the root of assurance, it is to pay a very poor tribute to the power

of the gospel. The truth is, morality is best guaranteed by Christ, and not by any precautions we can take before Christ gets a chance,..." (ibid p 211f). In fact the assurance offered in the New Testament is only available to sinners, and thus could not logically lead to presumption.

Together with assurance, faith in the New Testament brings a sense of constraint to serve Christ. It was here that Denney began his interpretation of 2 Corinthians 5:14ff, and it is this constraint which he sees as the motive and guarantee of sanctification. But sanctification is not something separate and distinct from faith, it is rather the working out of faith. It is what it means to believe and to go on believing.

He insists on the ethical nature of the relationship of faith. As we noted he is not happy with theories which speak of a mystic union between Christ and the believer, and which see in Romans 6 a different theology from that found in Romans 3 rather than a continuation and interpretation of it. It is a standing criticism that Denney was unable to appreciate mysticism, but such criticism rather misses the point. Mysticism as a spiritual exercise practised by Christians such as von Hugel does not seem to have interested him. He did not deny its value or criticise it so much as ignore it. In our present context however, he is concerned about the interpretation of St. Paul, the question how far it is possible to find mysticism in Paul, and particularly the implication that there is something superior about the religion which finds mysticism there. Writing to Robertson Nicoll he comments, "... when a man maintains that there is something which may be described as a 'mystical union', which transcends a moral union, all I can say is that my mind does not follow him. I cannot conceive anything which transcends a moral union. ... much of what appears (in St. Paul) to favour the idea of a mystical as going beyond a moral union is the language of passion, which has a poetic and emotional truth. ... It is just like the language of passion in which the sacramental bread and wine are called the body and blood of Christ. No other language would satisfy Christian feeling. Yet they are not the body and blood of Christ, and a great deal that is written about the mystical union seems to me as unreal as transubstantiation." (Letters of Principal James Denney to W. Robertson Nicoll p 38f)

The ethical union of faith leads to a death on the believer's part to those things to which Christ died. So Denney can write quite sermonically of the Christian's death to sin, the flesh, and the law - taken as legalism. There is a daily mortification in Christian life, and a continuing response to the act of God in Christ. If this is called a dying and rising with Christ that is the language of passion not mysticism. We do not in fact die and rise as he did. "Our dying with Him, ... is a present and an ethical experience; it is a dying to sin, a being or rather a becoming insensible to its appeals and its power; our living with Him is a being alive to God, a new sensibility to His claim upon our life. In other words, our union with Christ is not metaphysical or mystical, but moral..." (The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation p 304).

Strangely he does not speak of the work of the Holy Spirit applying the work of Christ. When one considers that he has an acknowledged debt to Calvin, and that echoes of Calvin's thought can sometimes be heard in his work, one might expect him to use this typically Calvinist theme. He seems in fact to be wary of references to the Spirit. He was not happy about their inclusion in the catholic creeds. "In spite of the creeds, there is no such expression in the New Testament as believing in the Holy Ghost. The Spirit is not an object of faith like Christ or God, it is an experience which comes to people through faith." (ibid p 308). The Spirit is not an extra to be added to faith. "Theologically, the Spirit is the divine correlative of faith, and of the dying with Christ and living with Christ, ... it is the power of God which is manifested in every Christian experience whatever. It is not something specifically divine which comes through baptism and has no relation to faith and justification; ..." (The Death of Christ p 139). It is doubtful how far these references - especially the 'it' rather than 'he' - are compatible with traditional Trinitarianism, and Denney was criticised on this issue during his life. For our present purposes it is enough to see that he regards the Spirit rather as the experience of faith, and lists the characteristics of power, life, and joy, which should be found with it.

Finally we turn to the sacraments and the church. There is little evidence, but what there is shows a change of attitude to the sacraments. Certain early comments are sometimes quoted as if they give his final position.[1] Arguing for the centrality of the death of Christ in the New Testament, he wrote "From the New Testament point of view, the sacraments contain the gospel in brief; they contain it in inseparable connection with the death of Jesus; and as long as they hold their place in the Church the saving significance of that death has a witness which it will not be easy to dispute." (ibid p 60f). Later in the same work "... both of the sacraments are forms into which we may put as much of the gospel as they will carry; and St. Paul, for his part, practically puts the whole of his gospel into each." (ibid p 98). Speaking of Romans 6 he writes "When ... Paul argues that baptism into Christ means baptism into His death, he is not striking out a new thought, of a somewhat venturesome originality, to ward off a shrewd blow suddenly aimed at his gospel; he is only bringing out what was all along to him the essential meaning of this ordinance." (ibid p 97), and he describes both sacraments as, "... ordinances with which every Christian was familiar, and without which a place in the Christian community could neither be acquired or retained,..." (ibid p 98).

This early attitude does not seem to have been maintained. He never denies the place which the sacraments have in the New Testament, but he never deals with them at length, nor does he seem to think that they need to figure very largely in Christian life. In his last work he seems to take back what he had previously said about the accepted connection between baptism and the death of Christ. Baptism is clearly symbolic of washing away of sin, and therefore, since cleansing from sin is necessarily connected with the death of Christ so is baptism. But he is less happy with the argument of Romans 6. Here, he says, Paul goes beyond the idea of washing to the idea of a union with the death and resurrection of Jesus that is primarily ethical. He implies that it would have been better had the apostle kept the two ideas distinct. Further, he suggests, "It is forcing the language of verse 6 - 'knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him' - to argue

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1. cf J.R. Taylor: 'God loves like that' p 52f, 59.

from it, ... that this whole conception of baptism was familiar to the Romans independently of Paul, and was in fact current in the Church and simply inherited by him" (The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation p 316). While this does not specifically contradict the earlier quotation it definitely seems to be implied in the earlier passage that Paul is referring to a generally accepted teaching on the meaning of baptism.

What seems to have happened is that, between the two passages, Denney has become increasingly concerned about ideas of mystical union which seemed to him to detract from what he took to be the true idea - that of moral union. Romans 6 is, of course, a very useful passage for advocates of a mystical union so Denney has to isolate it. He suggests, rightly it seems, that the argument of the passage is not logically coherent. "The death and resurrection of Christ have one meaning in the premisses and another in the conclusion - one meaning in Him, and another in application to us." (ibid p 317). For the argument to work it would seem that Christ must be presumed to be more holy after the resurrection than before it. Paul, claims Denney, seems to lose his way in the argument, and breaks it off with the demand 'Reckon yourselves dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus'. "Apart from this self-reckoning, which when real is simply the renewal of faith's identification of itself with the Saviour, all this about union with the death and resurrection of Christ in baptism is meaningless." (ibid p 317). This is an uncharacteristic way for Denney to treat Paul. One cannot help thinking he is bound by opinions arrived at elsewhere.

The general idea of the gift of the Spirit in baptism he explains in accordance with what we have seen to be his view of the Spirit. In New Testament times baptism was adult believer's baptism. As such it would be a time of high and serious emotion as the baptised consciously responded, or gave witness of their response, to Christ in faith. When the emotion was not present steps were taken to remedy the defect (Acts 8:14ff, 19:2ff). Such experiences cannot be expected with infant baptism, and so the traditional language connecting baptism and the Spirit is now redundant. He concluded, "Baptism enters into the process of salvation only when it coincides with the act of faith

in which the soul, under solemn and moving conditions, consciously and irrevocably commits itself to Christ, identifying itself, in spiritual passion, with Him who died for it and rose again." (ibid p 319f)

Similar arguments are used of the Lord's Supper. There can be no suggestion of grace being passed on. Christ is present in the sense conveyed by the elements, as one who once gave himself for us and perpetually offers himself to us. But he is always so present, not only in the celebration of the sacraments. They do not contain grace, they are illustrations of grace. Thus the supper is a declaration of faith rather than a reception on our part, a kind of acted sermon. He is scathingly critical of any linking of Christ or grace to the elements. "There is no intelligible meaning in saying that Christ is present in the bread and wine, or in, with, and under the bread and wine, or, what is the poorest of all evasions of intelligence, in 'sacramental union' with the bread and wine; the presence of Christ neither has nor can have any metaphysical relation whatever to the sacramental elements. ... however the believing soul may be helped in its relation to Christ by rites like baptism and the supper, it is the negation not only of Christian experience, but of human intelligence, to say that the new life is essentially or vitally related to the water, or to the bread and wine." (ibid p 321f). A thoroughly Zwinglian position.

It is perhaps natural from this that while he sees that the Church was an inspiring concept to the New Testament writers and the Reformers (cf Studies in Theology p 173f), it does not have a large place in his writing. He was in fact very active in ecclesiastical affairs. His correspondence shows great interest and active concern for what might be called contemporary church politics. But theologically the subject is not seriously raised. He speaks movingly of Christians bearing each others burdens, of training each other in faith, and it is clear that the church as an institution is accepted. But if we had only his theological works on which to form a judgement it would be that the Church had not a very important place in his thought.

Surprisingly the situation is similar with regard to scripture.

His teaching is thoroughly biblical, but apart from one lecture in Studies in Theology (cf pp 202-227), he never gives a systematic account of what he believed about it. Clearly, as we have seen, he was not concerned to defend its supposed infallibility. But while the rights of criticism were to be allowed, and could bring the Bible to life in a way that a flat orthodoxy could not, he also saw the danger of an excessive concern for criticism. Asked to help in producing some simple commentaries for church teachers, he wrote, "It is certainly a drawback to most recent commentaries that the study of criticism has apparently blinded the commentators to the fact that the books on which they are working are bits of the Bible - that but for that fact they would in all probability never have reached us - and that the chief business of the commentator is to elucidate their significance as vehicles of revelation..." (Letters of Principal James Denney to W. Robertson Nicoll p 171).

The phrase 'vehicles of revelation' is probably the key to his understanding of scripture as far as our present interest is concerned. The Bible was the means by which the Gospel was conveyed to men. It was not necessary to establish a doctrine of inspiration in advance, or worry over individual points. The great thing which was secure was that the scriptures did bring Christ to men. "If they (the Gospels) truly represent Christ to us, so that we gain the faith in Him which their authors had, is not that all we can desire?" (Studies in Theology p 208). Later he put the point more succinctly by arguing that the authority of scripture came from the truth it taught, rather than that any particular doctrine was true because it was in scripture. Speaking of the truth of the Atonement found in experience he wrote "We find this truth in the Christian Scriptures undoubtedly, and therefore we prize them; but the truth does not derive its authority from the Scriptures, or from those who penned them. On the contrary, the scriptures are prized by the Church because through them the soul is brought into contact with this truth." (Atonement and the Modern p 248). In other words he is using Luther's dictum of accepting that which 'plies Christ, and then using the gospel which has come through scripture to test the scripture which bore it. The argument is circular, but, accepting the authority of the experience, as Denney does, it is sound as far as it goes. There is a lot of what might

be considered important 'Biblical' teaching, however, which could not be established in this way and it may be that Denney has got around the difficulties too easily.

In practice however his approach is very conservative and he does seem to accept the teaching because it is biblical. It is for that reason that he is concerned to show that there are not two gospels but only one in the New Testament. He thus gets the authority of Jesus, which all of his contemporaries would accept in some way, for the rest of the New Testament. In his sermons he appeals to scripture as an accepted authority, and he urges his students to read the Bible in public in the way that his friend J.P. Struthers read it, "He never reads scripture as if he had written it: he always reads it as if listening for a voice." (attributed to Denney by Adam Burnet, cited by J.R. Taylor: God loves like that p 140).

Those who read expectantly will be rewarded; those who read merely critically will find nothing but cause for criticism. This is a further example of the existential note which we have found in Denney before. It emerges in a passionate rebuke of those who regarded Paul as thinking in out-dated Pharisaical terms which could not be understood in the twentieth century. "To say that Paul is unintelligible, or that he presents Christianity in a way which does it every kind of injustice and is finally unacceptable to us, is to fly in the face of history and experience. There have always been people who found Paul intelligible and accepted the gospel as he preached it. There are such people still, if not in theological class rooms, then in mission halls, at street corners, in lonely rooms. It is not historical scholarship that is wanted for the understanding of him, and neither is it the insight of genius: it is despair. Paul did not preach for scholars, nor even for philosophers; he preached for sinners. He had no gospel except for men whose mouths were stopped, and who were standing condemned at the bar of God. They understood him, and they find him eminently intelligible still." (The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation p 180).

Some criticisms of Denney have been made in passing. We have noted the accusation that he makes the entire New Testament speak in

one voice, that of Paul, omitting other emphases. We have also seen his supposed inability to grasp mysticism, leading some to say that he always wanted things to be more simple than they in fact were or could be. We noticed too that his view of the Spirit is open to criticism, and that it could well be argued that his conception of the sacraments and the place of the church in the Christian life lack depth and richness. However, it is not the purpose of this study to present a full-scale criticism of the theologians mentioned. It is only concerned with aspects of their work - though it happens that in the case of Denney those aspects are his chief concern and account for practically the whole of his writing.

In the more limited perspective of this study it could be argued that there is one major omission from his thought. The theory of atonement known as the 'Christus Victor', or Dramatic, or Classic view has achieved considerable popularity in this century. Its exponents claim, with some justice, that it has good New Testament support, and, as we have seen, it is found in the Fathers. It might seem strange that Denney does not give more weight to it.

In The Death of Christ he mentions the possibility that Paul thought of Christ's reconciling work as including spiritual beings as well as men. But his is inclined to dismiss this line of thinking as 'quasi-poetical', arguing that if it was really important it would have been more fully worked out in the apostles's argument (op cit p 141ff). It is interesting to notice that this criticism was made to him following the publication of the book, for in the revised and enlarged edition he writes "A friendly critic of this book pointed out what he regarded as a serious omission in it - the want of any reference to the death of Christ as a victory over Satan." (ibid p 203). Even so he hardly deals with the point seriously. Taking it to refer chiefly to the Johannine references to the Prince of this World, he merely excuses himself with the self-deprecatory comment "A mind which does not naturally personalise the principle of evil - turning the principle into a prince - has the same embarrassment in dealing with these passages as with the Pauline ones referred to at p 143. Possibly we get out too easily with our abstract nouns." (ibid p 203f). Though he goes on to admit that in the actual conflict with evil it

seems more natural to speak of a person than a principle. It might be pointed out that exponents of the 'Christus Victor' theory would not all begin with the fourth gospel, and would not limit the victory over evil to Jesus' death. An attractive feature of this view for many is that it can take in the entire incarnation.

More revealing of Denney's attitude is a comment to Robertson Nicoll about The Atonement and the Modern Mind, which, it is to be remembered, was meant to answer problems which had arisen from the earlier book. He writes "There is nothing in them (the book was first in lecture form) about 'the powers of evil' - not that I do not think there is anything to say, but I do not think it is an aspect of the facts which the modern mind finds very accessible." (Letters of Principal James Denney to W. Robertson Nicoll p 31).

His last book has one aspect of the theory in a passage depicting Christ's victory over death and sin, but it remains in embryonic form (cf Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation p 244f). The conclusion of this passage probably explains why the theory as a whole would not have appealed to him, "The world not only contains sin in the sense of a power hostile to Christ and to us, a power which He has vanquished in bloody conflict, and which we must vanquish in His train; it contains our sin. Besides its relation to sin abstractly considered, the work of the Reconciler must have some specific relation to sin in this latter aspect; it must deal with sin not merely as a power at work in the world, but as something for which responsibility already lies upon us." (ibid p 250). It may be that this comment exposes the weakness of the Christus Victor theory. It can inspire confidence in Christ's victory over hostile powers and sin in general, but it has less to say to the earnest individual concerned about his own sin and his standing before God. As we have seen, Denney the evangelist, was more concerned with a theory of the death of Christ which could come into intelligible relation to sin as it afflicted that sort of individual. It is perhaps a weakness, though in another sense his greatest strength, that his theology was directed so single-mindedly in that direction.

He is left, then, as the great exponent of the objective view

of atonement understood through the category of 'substitution'. As such his writings have provided an armoury for evangelical theologians throughout this century so far, and his type of theology has provided the theological undergirding for the traditional type of evangelism. However, he did not convince all. Some who were impressed, often in spite of themselves, with the brilliance of his logical destruction of other positions were not satisfied that his own was immune from attack. Both the objective view in general and Denney's particular expression of it were attacked by his contemporaries. Rather than consider objections to his position here, it will be easier to see them in the work of one of those contemporaries Hastings Rashdall.

IV. HASTINGS RASHDALL (1858-1924)

To turn from Denney to Rashdall is to move into a completely different atmosphere. Not only do the two have different starting points and methods, they have a different emotional approach to the subject. It is not surprising that their final positions were so far apart.

Denney we saw was a New Testament specialist, almost a Pauline specialist. He was not a philosopher and scarcely a historian of Christian thought. Further there is a great sense of emotional involvement in Denney's work. At his most scholarly he remains an evangelist concerned to preach a gospel which is related to the needs of sinful man, and which alone can save him from condemnation. His starting point is the need for a reconciliation of the relationship between God and man which has been corrupted by sin. Thus his work has a distinct narrowness. Nearly all his writing is concerned with atonement in one way or another.

Rashdall could hardly have been more different. He was a philosopher and historian as well as a theologian, indeed perhaps he was a better philosopher or historian than theologian. There is a coolness and intellectualism about his work which is in marked contrast to Denney's passionate involvement. He could hardly be called an evangelist in the same sense as that word is applicable to Denney, but he was concerned to present the Christian gospel as he saw it to his contemporaries. However, where Denney preached to the conscience stricken sinner concerned about his standing before a holy God, Rashdall commended a superior moral philosophy to the consideration of 'modern cultivated man'. Not that he did not consider the decision to accept or reject it as of great, even ultimate, importance, but his more philosophical starting point dictated a different approach. His starting point also dictated the proportion of his considerable output that is directly related to the subject of this study. While he wrote far more than Denney, only one large book, a few essays and sermons, and passing references in works on other topics will be relevant here.

Hastings Rashdall spent most of his life at New College, Oxford, as a student and then as a teacher of philosophy. Between 1883 and 1889 he taught at Lampeter and Durham (where he complained of the Canon-ridden society), before returning to Oxford, first to Hertford and Balliol and then, in 1895, to New College. There he remained, from 1910 combining his university work with a Canonry at Hereford, until he was appointed Dean of Carlisle in 1917. At that point he left academic life but did not change his academic interests, it might be argued that the cloistered life of scholarship, which he seems to have enjoyed immensely, is reflected in his sensitive, but strangely unworldly or even unrealistic, and highly philosophical approach to Christianity.

Like many others of his generation he was profoundly influenced by the idealist philosophy to T.H. Green.[1] But he was never an absolute idealist in the Hegelian sense. He would never agree that all finite minds are in some sense constituent parts of one infinite mind. C.C.J. Webb suggests that the best description of his position was 'Personal Idealism', and thinks that 'The positive conviction which dominated all Rashdall's thought on philosophical and theological questions was that of the absolute, unqualified reality of individual persons, minds or spirits." (Rashdall as Philosopher and Theologian, an essay included in Matheson op cit pp 240-249. p 240). In the field of ethics Rashdall defined his own position as 'Ideal Utilitarianism'. He explained this as meaning that a morally mature man must choose the greatest good, but that, in contrast to the older utilitarianism, this good need not be pleasure in any obvious sense - good will, goodness, virtue, character, is an end in itself. "True moral judgement is a judgement of value. It is expressed in the form 'this is good', not 'this is right'." (Conscience and Christ p 13). It was in moral consciousness that he found the revelation of God. These two considerations - personal individuality and the moral consciousness - dominate his thought. He seems to have thought that they were self-evident, and that they also dominated the thought of his contemporaries. It seemed to him that when modern cultivated man turned from the Christian church it was because of the whole scheme

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1. cf P.E. Matheson: The Life of Hastings Rashdall (1928) pp 29, 39.

of supernaturalism in which Christian theology and ethics were presented, and its claim to be immune from scientific investigation. He therefore made it his task to show that traditional Christian doctrines could be translated into modern thought forms.

Such a programme had obvious apologetic value at the time. But for him it was not merely an apologetic or defensive move of the moment dictated by contemporary circumstances. He was convinced that progress in human moral consciousness, which he accepted as a fact, should be accompanied by development in the understanding of Christian doctrine. Jesus, he believed, had taught and illustrated in his life certain basic principles, but development was to be expected in the understanding and application of those principles. Furthermore it is significant that Rashdall's first major work was The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages (1895), and that he was a life-long student and admirer of Scholastic theology. Ideas which motivated twentieth century modernism are found in his appreciation of Thomas Aquinas, "The work which Aquinas did for the church of his day - the fusion of the highest speculative thought of the time with its profoundest spiritual convictions, the reconciliation of the new truths of the present with the kernel of truth embodied in the traditional creed - is a task which will have to be done again and again ... the work of Aquinas is built on the solid foundation upon which all such efforts must repose - the grand conviction that Religion is rational and that Reason is divine,..." (Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages Vol 1 p 367. cited Matheson op cit p 71f). It is easy to believe that, over twenty years later, he saw himself in the same tradition when he wrote, "One of the most crying needs of the Church at the present moment is a serious attempt at re-thinking its traditional Theology. A large part of that theology has obviously become more or less unintelligible to modern man ... It needs to be re-examined, and (where necessary) reconstructed, in the light of modern philosophy, modern science, and modern criticism." (The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology, 1919, p vii).

This was currently a popular attitude, and Rashdall's advocacy of it made him the acknowledged leader of the Modernist movement in the Church of England. It is probable that he was not temperamentally

suited to such a role, and that his association with that movement led to him being associated, in the popular mind and in the minds of some theological opponents, with ideas that were more extreme and unorthodox than any he held himself. Nevertheless, his genuine sympathies with the Modernist movement are plain. He was Vice-President of the Churchman's Union 'for the advancement of liberal religious thought' from its inauguration in 1898, becoming President in 1923, and was a supporter of and contributor to both the 'Liberal Churchman' and the 'Modern Churchman' which were successively its organs. He shared the mood of crusading confidence of the Modernists as they saw themselves leading their fellow churchmen from the dark superstition of traditional theology into the pure light of modern thought.

The existence of God, he believed, was a necessary postulate of the moral consciousness, and a natural inference from the sheer existence of the material world, since nothing could exist except as the object of some mind. Such a mind must be personal in the same sense that human minds are personal, though immeasurably superior to them. Thus the relationship between God and man was a personal relationship of wills and minds. He had no understanding of, or patience with, appeals to immediate religious experience. God revealed himself in man's moral consciousness, and men grew nearer to him as they discerned and obeyed that revelation. It was self-evident to Rashdall that in his own generation the entire race had made immense strides in that direction.

His Christology, which came to be the centre of bitter dispute, springs from this starting point. He sees Jesus as a unique example of what man could and should be. This is expressed in an early sermon, "The highest that we know in man is the highest that we can think of God. .... In Jesus Christ humanity attained its highest moral development, and just because of that perfect humanity, the conscience of mankind has recognised in him a supreme, a unique, in a sense a final revelation of that God who all through the world's history had been by slow, successive stages revealing himself to the human spirit." (Doctrine and Development, 1894 p 80. cited P.J. Kirkby: Dean Hastings Rashdall Modern Churchman Vol XVII, 1927 p 486). His

biographer finds his position best expressed in three propositions from an article on Miracles and the Divinity of Christ which appeared in the 'Modern Churchman' in 1911. First that the indwelling of God in Christ must not be isolated from his indwelling in every man. Secondly that it must be recognised as a unique or supreme example of this general indwelling. Thirdly that the 'proof' of Christ's Divinity must be sought in the appeal which he makes to the moral and religious consciousness of mankind.[1] It is from teaching like this that J.K. Mozley can describe his Christology as "... the old Antiochene position pushed very far..." (J.K. Mozley: The Heart of the Gospel, 1925 p 129ff). Though interestingly Rashdall does not refer to the Antiochene fathers apart from occasional footnotes.

Clearly Rashdall believed that his position was thoroughly orthodox. Unfortunately in his desire to stress the role of conscience and Jesus' similarity to all men, while at the same time not offending modern cultivated man, he spent a great deal of time explaining what he did not believe, and what he did not think it necessary for others to believe. From very early in his career he made it plain that he did not consider that the subscription to the catholic creeds demanded of a clergyman of the Church of England committed those who made it to belief in every detail of the creeds. He believed that the incarnation, understood in the way explained above, was basic to Christianity, but that its essential truth was not affected by scepticism about the Virgin Birth, miracles or the Resurrection. Indeed he informed Bishop Lightfoot of Durham of his own doubts about the Virgin Birth before his ordination in 1894. Apart from that however, he was normally content to say that scepticism would be consistent with the office of a clergyman, rather than confessing to any major disagreements with the creeds.

In stressing what might be called the essential normality of Jesus he clearly ran counter to the stress on Jesus' eschatological teaching which had been made common largely by the work of Schweitzer. He is at pains to set aside, or at least to tone down, that emphasis. "According to the ultra-Eschatological School, all the emphasis (in Jesus' teaching) was upon the Eschatology. I believe the exact opposite to be the case. In the teaching of Jesus all the emphasis

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1. Matheson: op cit p 134f.

was on the Ethics, and upon Religion of an intensely ethical type." (Conscience and Christ p 59). While Jesus may at an early stage of his ministry have expected some future in-breaking of God into history in a dramatic and supernatural way, he came to realise that the Kingdom was a close ethical and spiritual union of man with God.

The difficulty with this sort of argument is the difficulty of making any distinction between Jesus and other ethical teachers. Rashdall saw this, but it did not worry him. He did not himself deny the uniqueness of Jesus, but such a denial would not have been important for him since the important thing was the teaching, not the one who gave it. "I think it should be very distinctly realised that the truth and value of the Christian Ethic does not depend on the fact of its having been taught by Jesus Himself. ... If it could be shown that the sayings which we have been in the habit of regarding as most characteristic of the historical Jesus were in reality none of His, if it could be shown that there never was a historical Jesus, or that we know nothing to speak of about His teaching, the truth and value of the teaching attributed to our Lord in the Gospels would not be one whit diminished." (ibid p 274f). He was not himself so sceptical of the historical evidence, but he was quite sure that Jesus had never made any claim to uniqueness or Divinity.

It was this sort of teaching which led to the great controversy of his career. In 1921 the conference of the Modern Churchman's Union met at Girton College, Cambridge, and took as its theme 'Christ and the Creeds'. The Christ of whom they spoke was a liberal or humanist Christ. All were convinced of his humanity, and spoke of it passionately. His Divinity, which they seemed genuinely to wish to assert, they derived from the moral excellence of the humanity. Rashdall's paper on 'Christ as Logos and Son of God', does not seem exceptional among the others. He denied that Jesus claimed to be Divine, "Jesus did not claim divinity for Himself ... Never in any critically well-attested sayings is there anything which suggests that His conscious relation to God was other than that of a man towards God - the attitude which he wished that all men should adopt towards God." (cited R. Lloyd op cit Vol II p 42). As he later said this was the sort of thing he had been teaching for years, and he

considered it quite conservative. However, the paper was widely reported as denying the Divinity of Christ. Perhaps because he was recognised as the leader of the movement, at least intellectually, it was Rashdall who was most bitterly attacked. Chief among his theological critics was Gore, an opponent since Rashdall had made his views on subscription known many years previously, but the press also took up the matter with such virulence and lack of knowledge of the issues involved or the actual contents of his paper that Rashdall was able to sue one national newspaper for damages.

His biographer speaks of Rashdall's amazement and dismay at the furore which his paper caused, suggesting that it cast a shadow over his last years and that he could rightly be bitter at the treatment he received, particularly from Gore.[1] Roger Lloyd gives a different side of the picture, commenting that, "Dozens, perhaps hundreds of lonely parish priests were deeply disquieted and even daunted by the weight of intellectual authority apparently arrayed against the orthodox presentation of the Faith which had sustained their fathers and ancestors." (op cit Vol II p 45). This aspect of the affair would apparently have been foreign to Rashdall. There is a certain pathetic charm in his naive assumption that he has said nothing at all unusual.

But he could honestly claim that his teaching had been consistent throughout his long career. This is well brought out by Kirkby who compares statements from sermons and academic works from different periods of his life.[2] Following the Girton Conference he preached a number of sermons in Carlisle Cathedral outlining his position. In one of them he said, "I have tried - not only in that little paper at Cambridge, but in all my teaching during the last thirty-seven years of my clerical life - to help people to see some intelligible meaning in these formulae, which so many repeat without meaning anything definite by them, and which so many cast away as worthless because they cannot find a meaning for them." (Kirkby op cit p 484). We now turn to his attempt to find intelligible meaning in the church's formulae about atonement.

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1. cf Matheson op cit pp 206ff.
2. cf Kirkby op cit p 484f.

We have found in Rashdall two major emphases:- the primacy of the moral consciousness in man as his contact with ultimate reality, and the recognition of Jesus as the supreme revelation both of God and of man's possible relation with him. It is to be expected therefore that he will understand atonement in terms of the effect of the second on the first; of the perfect revelation in Christ winning the assent of the moral consciousness in man. In other words, atonement is brought about by a change in man which makes him 'at one' with God, rather than by some act outside of man which in some way changes the way things are in the world. The work of Christ is to bring about this change.

This sort of theory is known variously as the 'exemplarist', 'moral influence', or 'subjective' view of atonement. It was very popular in English theology in the early part of this century, helped by the general revulsion from the supposed immorality and externality of the traditional objective view, and by the insistence on stressing the love of God and using personal analogies which we found in MacLeod Campbell and Bushnell. In England Rashdall was its chief exponent, though it was put forward in a slightly less uncompromising form by R.S. Franks, first in his historical work '<u>History of the Doctrine of the Work of Christ</u>' (1918), and later in '<u>The Atonement</u>' (1934). It received its classic expression, and for some theologians its name, from Peter Abelard (1079-1142).

Rashdall's first public exposition of this view seems to have been in a University Sermon of 1897 entitled '<u>Abelard's Doctrine of the Atonement</u>'[1] His concluding judgement on it was "I believe it to be as noble and perspicuous a statement as can even yet be found of the faith which is still the life of Christendom." (<u>op cit</u> p 50). He never seems to have doubted that judgement, and his Bampton Lectures, delivered in 1915 though not published until 1919, are a defence and exposition of it, though chiefly in the form of a criticism of other options. Towards the end of that book he gives what he takes to be the most explicit statement of Abelard's view in the words of a pupil, Peter Lombard, "So great a pledge of love having been

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1. cf <u>The Expositor</u> Series 4, Vol VIII pp 37-50.

given us, we are both moved and kindled to love God who did such great things for us; and by this we are justified, that is, being loosed from our sins we are made just. The death of Christ therefore justifies us, inasmuch as through it charity is stirred up in our hearts." (The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology p 438).

Rashdall believes this view is the only one that could possibly be held by modern man, and that it is true to the teaching of Jesus, though he knows that it is by no means the one most generally taken in the course of Church history. He points out that no council of the Church has ever issued a definition of atonement, but knows that Christians have generally connected it with certain beliefs about Jesus' person, more particularly his death as the objective ground on the basis of which sins are forgiven, and that the benefits of this work have usually been considered to be found in connection with the Church its preaching and sacraments.

He puts forward his own views in three steps. First he attempts to show that his view correctly represents the teaching of Jesus. Secondly he traces the history of the doctrine from the New Testament to the Reformation. This is the bulk of the book and in it he tries to show that the close connection between atonement and the death of Jesus was a mistake, though an understandable one, and that the 'subjective' theory has often broken through in some form, though apart from the case of Abelard it has always been in competition with other views. Thirdly he concludes his historical survey with a chapter on Luther at the end of which he gathers together certain earlier points, and certain assumptions which have become plain, to make a sustained attack on objective views of atonement before giving a final positive statement of Abelard's view. For the purposes of this study the long central section on the history of the doctrine is less important. We will refer to it briefly but concentrate on the first and last parts.

He begins with a study of the teaching of Jesus about forgiveness as it is found in the synoptic gospels, though admitting that a doctrine need not be assumed to be false because it is not actually found in Jesus' teaching. We have seen that the idea of doctrinal development had a secure place in his thinking. Nevertheless, he

suggests, the authority claimed for traditional formulations will be affected by the relation in which they stand to Jesus' teaching, "Still more will our attitude towards such interpretations be affected if it should be found that some of them are positively inconsistent with the teaching of Him whose mind they purport to represent." (ibid p 4)

What then was Jesus' teaching? According to Rashdall, as we have seen, it was strictly ethical. Jesus deepened and spiritualised the ethic of Judaism. Slowly he realised that he was the Messiah, and in that sense his teaching was Messianic - concerned with the Kingdom of God and entry to it. But the Kingdom was a spiritual and ethical conception of communion with God. Those who entered it had to be worthy. "The clear, unmistakable, invariable teaching of Jesus was that men were to be judged according to their works, including in the conception of works the state of the heart and intentions as scrutinized by an all-seeing God. The righteous were to be rewarded, the unrighteous were to be punished." (ibid p 12). The stress on the inner motives introduces the idea of repentance for wrong motives, and Rashdall shows the important place which appeals for repentance had in the teaching of Jesus. There is no inconsistency here as works flow from the inner state of the heart.

Underlying all is the revelation of the fatherhood of God. God, as a loving father, desires only what is good for all his children. The possibility of punishment is not ruled out, but the purpose of punishment, inflicted or threatened, is the improvement of the sinner. Thus when the sinner become better punishment becomes unnecessary. Sometimes Rashdall seems to suggest that the improvement must be actual and practically displayed in outward actions. But usually, and more consistently with his stress on the motives of the heart, he sees forgiveness and restoration to God the father as a natural and inevitable result of sincere repentance. Repentance is a radical change of heart or character, a return to God. Nothing more is needed than repentance, though its fruits will appear in Christian lives as "a test and pledge of its reality'. Thus there is no need for faith in Jesus' person or work.

In support of this he draws attention to a number of parables - the Lost Sheep, the Unmerciful Servant, the Two Sons, but most of all the Lukan parables of the Prodigal Son and the Pharisee and the Publican - in all these, he argues, forgiveness follows immediately upon repentance. "There is not the slightest suggestion that anything else but repentance is necessary - the actual death of a Saviour, belief in the atoning efficacy of that death or in any other article of faith, baptism, confession to any but God, absolution, reception of the holy eucharist, Church membership - not a hint of any of these. The truly penitent man who confesses his sins to God receives instant forgiveness." (ibid p 26). Jesus is presented primarily as a prophet or teacher; indications that he demanded faith in himself are to be attributed to later ideas which the evangelists have allowed to colour their presentation. And even if these later ideas are allowed to stand, forgiveness is not dependent on them, "... invariably it is obedience to the will of God as declared by Him and His disciples which is to be rewarded - obedience to His commands rather than any intellectual belief about Him or His Messianic work." (ibid p 21).

Rashdall knows that this is at variance with much later teaching which concentrates on the necessity of Jesus' death or speaks of 'conditions of salvation'. He presses this point home, "It is surely a difficult thing to say - as must be done if some later doctrine of the atonement is treated as the very essence of Christianity - that what was taught by Christ Himself was not Christianity at all." (ibid p 27). But there are synoptic passages which can be appealed to against this line of thought, and which can be taken to imply that Jesus connected salvation with his death. Rashdall speaks of two of them - the Ransom saying of Mark 10:45, and the sayings reported at the Last Supper.

Of Mark 10:45 there are two questions - is it a genuine saying of Jesus? and, if it is genuine, what was its original meaning? Without committing himself he seems to incline to the view that it is a later doctrinal addition. Since it is not in Luke he argues that it was not in the copy of Mark from which Luke copied, so that it must have been inserted in a later copy of Mark and thus got into Matthew. He seems to sense some weakness in this argument - rightly

so since this point has been heavily criticised - and so, in a long appended note he sets out his arguments in some detail. His main points are that Mark, or the last editor of Mark, seems to make additions in later ecclesiastical language; that the passage is out of context; and that it is the only use of Isaiah 53 in Mark. He sums up, "There is room for difference of opinion on the subject; but anyone who, in the teeth of this conflict of Gospel texts and of modern authorities, is really prepared to say that the genuineness of the words is certain, and to make his whole interpretation of Jesus turn upon the assumption of their genuineness, must be a person who has little sense of the nature of historical evidence." (ibid p 55)

On the possible meaning of the words if genuineness is allowed, he argues that the idea of a suffering Messiah, that is one whose suffering would be a central motif of his Messiah-ship, was too remote to have occurred easily to Jesus. The most natural meaning would be that he realised that the course of his ministry must lead to a clash with the authorities and possibly to execution, and that he meant the words literally. He would die physically and thus save his followers from a similar fate since one death would satisfy the authorities.

Again he seems a little embarrassed to leave the matter there. Thus he goes on to show that there was in current Jewish thought the idea that the suffering of the righteous could benefit the guilty, and that this idea finds classic expression in Isaiah 53. Nevertheless, he argues, this need not refer to any unique suffering and death. "It is certainly possible that our Lord may have applied Isaiah's conception of the suffering Servant to the Messiah, and so to Himself; or that without any such identification He may have thought of His death as benefitting others, not in any unique or exclusive way, but just as the sufferings of other righteous men had done and might yet do. ... But, in whatever sense Jesus may have expected that the sufferings of the Messiah were to benefit others, the assertion that they would do so is a long way off from the dogma that forgiveness of sins could be purchased in this way and in no other." (ibid p 35). He concludes this section by arguing that to make too much of Jesus' death and to interpret it as substitutionary

would be out of keeping with the rest of his teaching. He puts particular stress on the fact that Jesus later prayed that the cup should pass from him. If his purpose in coming to the world had been to die, and if he himself had taught that this was so, it is not reasonable, Rashdall argues, that he should now pray that this purpose should not be fulfilled.

The Last Supper sayings are similarly critically handled. Only Matthew 26:28 refers to the forgiveness of sins, "... and the words which contain this reference are precisely the words which may most confidently be set aside." (ibid p 38). This is because Matthew is dependent on Mark and the Matthean addition "unto remision of sins" can be taken as a gloss on Mark's "this is my blood of the covenant". However, the Markan words themselves are clumsy and suggest a conflation of two traditions "my blood" and "blood of the covenant". Furthermore they do not seem in keeping with the words which follow in all the accounts, with slight variations, "... I will no more drink of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God." This, together with the fact that the shorter Lukan text, which Rashdall prefers, omits them, suggests - to Rashdall - that there was originally no reference to blood at all. However, if the genuineness is allowed, the covenant referred to would be that of Jeremiah 31:31ff where there is no sacrificial idea. Even if Jesus did speak "with a touch of bitter irony" of his blood as ratifying the covenant, it would be in the sense that covenant parties made a sacrifice of communion.

The words over the bread "this is my body" could mean "my self", in the sense that Jesus was devoting himself to their good. It could even, on the analogy of references in the Talmud, be taken to refer to his teaching. Rashdall seems to prefer the first. "But for our Lord to say that He was giving Himself for His disciples involves no idea of atonement - still less of an atonement upon which the forgiveness of the sins of the whole world depended. ... our Lord will be thinking of His death as sacrificial or vicarious only in the sense in which any great leader of men might regard a martyr's death as an act of self-sacrifice on behalf of his followers. Doubtless He may have felt that the death of the Messiah had a significance which the

death of no other man could have, but He claims for it no unique expiatory value." (ibid p 43). The last sentence introduces an interesting modification. Rashdall sees that the death of Christ has had an effect greater in degree, though he would say not different in kind, than that of any other martyr. This he traces to its power as the supreme revelation of loving service which kindles a response of grateful imitation in the hearts of those who see it.

This treatment of the synoptic material shows certain characteristics of Rashdall's thought. He insists that everything should be brought into line with the picture of Jesus as the ethical teacher and preacher, calling for repentance and proclaiming the possibility of free forgiveness. It is in line with this that he looks for a doctrine which will not separate Jesus' death from his life and teaching. Thirdly there are several references here to Jesus as the supreme martyr, a metaphor to which he often returns.

But it is also worth drawing attention here to a rather aggravating characteristic of his style, or perhaps of his way of conducting an argument. He frequently introduces a topic or a section of his case with a fairly dogmatic assertion. In the chapter we have considered an assertion such as that a passage is unlikely to be genuine, or that a certain set of ideas could not have been in Jesus' mind. But then, after developing this line of thought a little, he returns to say, 'however, even if that were not so ... then what would follow...' and gives a more qualified argument. This is somewhat disconcerting and smacks of verbal sleight of hand. One feels that he really wants to stick to the opening dogmatic assertion, but one cannot really criticise him on the basis of that assertion because clearly he has made qualifications, sometimes quite considerable qualifications. But, on the other hand, the adjustments which he allows under the qualifications have an air of unreality about them, since they are all under the rather grudging rubric 'even if...' and seem to be offerred as very much second best.

However, in spite of all qualifications, his own summing up is that the study of the synoptic gospels leads to "... 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." (ibid p 45).

From this he suggests that in going on to study the history of the idea of atonement two basic assumptions can be made. First that, though development in the understanding of the doctrine may occur, "... no doctrine of the atonement can be a legitimate development of our Lord's teaching, no doctrine of the atonement can be genuinely Christian, which contradicts a feature of that teaching so fundamental as the truth that God is a loving Father, who will pardon sin upon the sole condition of true repentance." And secondly, "The only atoning influence that can be recognised in the death of Christ, or in any other aspect of His work, is one which operates by actually helping to produce that repentance and moral regeneration upon which, and upon which alone, according to the Master's express teaching, forgiveness depends." (ibid p 48).

Yet, in spite of what seems so plain to Rashdall, it is clear that the later church has taught that forgiveness, though requiring repentance, has been in some way dependent on Jesus' death. Rashdall must therefore explain how this change took place.

It would have been usual at the time he was writing to have blamed the apostle Paul. We noted that many theologians distinguished between Jesus and Paul. But Rashdall does not take that line. Referring to I Corinthians 15:3, he writes, "The belief that in some sense Christ dies for sin - in order that sin might be forgiven and removed - was thus quite certainly part of what St. Paul received. ... It resulted from the reflection of the church in the interval which elapsed between the Crucifixion and St. Paul's conversion..." (ibid p 76). Yet, he asserts, such a belief is not present in the speeches in the Acts of the Apostles which make the resurrection central, and see salvation as due to the Messiah's teaching and example, not his death. How then did the new belief grow up?

He gives a number of reasons broadly due to the Jews' understanding, or rather from his view misunderstanding, of their history, rituals,

and chiefly, scriptures. There was the idea of Yahweh's interventions in history by great acts of power, leading to the idea of a coming great act of judgement and the establishing of his rule. There was the idea of sacrifice, which, though frequently spiritualised by the 'higher minds' of Israel, would commonly be seen as propitiatory and would thus provide a background against which the death of Christ could be interpreted. More important, and destined to be linked with the idea of sacrifice, was the idea of the expiatory and regenerative value of innocent suffering, which developed particularly during the exile and reached its peak in the idea of the Suffering Servant, representative of the ideal Israelite or of the faithful remnant in Israel. This came to be the most important force in the change of understanding of the atonement, for the spiritual reality of vicarious suffering "... easily degenerates into the superstition of vicarious expiation, and even the more immoral notion of vicarious punishment." (ibid p 72). Rashdall points out on several occasions that there had been no identification of the Messiah and the Servant before the time of Jesus. Besides these Jewish sources he acknowledges that some would find influences from Philo or the Hellenistic mystery religions, but he is inclined to discount those.

Of these possible sources of early Christian thinking on our subject Rashdall concentrates on the use made of Isaiah 53 and the idea of vicarious suffering. He argues first that the execution of Jesus as a criminal presented the Christians with a great apologetic problem. How could such a person be God or the Son of God? But, secondly, he argues that the first Christians, most of whom were Jews, would accept without question the divine authority of the Old Testament scriptures. Hence they could find the answer to their problem by asserting that Jesus had to die in fulfilment of Isaiah 53. "The belief was accepted on authority. It became part of the Christian's accepted creed that sins were forgiven through the death of Jesus, because God had expressly revealed that by this and by no other means were they to be forgiven." (ibid p 81). Thus they moved "... from the idea of salvation through a Saviour who had been crucified to the idea of salvation through His crucifixion..." (ibid p 82). So the atoning efficacy of Christ's death was accepted on the authority of the Old Testament, especially Isaiah 53. It was

inevitable that later minds would attempt an explanation of how this death should have this effect.

In the New Testament the classic explanation comes from St. Paul. Here Rashdall makes some interesting and somewhat confusing distinctions. On the surface he makes a simple division between Paul's theory of atonement and his doctrine of justification. One might therefore expect that the first part will deal with the objective ground of atonement and the second with its subjective appropriation. There are indications that this is the division which Rashdall intends. However, that apparently neat plan is crossed by another division. Running through all his treatment of Paul is a distinction between what Paul says, the logic of his arguments, and what he might be inferred to believe at a deeper level. In other words, between Paul the theologian and Paul the believer or simple religious man. This second distinction seems to be more important to Rashdall.

St. Paul's objective theory of atonement, he argues, is found chiefly in the epistle to the Romans. It is worked out to answer the question how could Gentiles become Christians without accepting the Jewish law. Paul answers in two steps. First he shows from scripture and experience that neither Jews nor Gentiles can expect to be justified by works of the law. Not only are all in fact sinners, but all have an evil inclination derived from Adam. Though it is in fact <u>death</u> rather than <u>sin</u> that Paul traces from Adam, and in fact the source of sin is often found in the flesh, the gist of the argument is clear. All have sinned and are sinful. Therefore man cannot hope for justification by works of the law.

For Paul the objective ground is quite clearly the death of Christ. This is clear when he turns to say how, in face of this difficulty, man is in fact justified. There are passages which refer salvation simply to the name of Jesus (I Cor 6:11); others speak also of the Resurrection (Rom 4:25; I Cor 15:17); but it is more usual to refer it to the death of Christ (Rom 3:24ff; 5:9). "That is the main thesis of the Roman Epistle. The intimate connection between justification and the death of Christ is stated over and over again. ... St. Paul does not quite say why God could not remit the penalty

of sin without the death of His Son. But it cannot be denied that those theologians who declare that this would be incompatible with God's justice - the justice which requires that somehow sin should be punished - or with the consistency which demands the infliction of the particular punishment which God had threatened, namely death - are only bringing out the latent presuppositions of Paul's thought." (ibid p 91f).

In other words, Paul teaches substitutionary atonement. The idea is anathema to Rashdall. Later we shall see the bitterness with which he attacks it. It is all the more interesting therefore to notice here how fully he insists on its place in Paul's thought. "It is impossible to get rid of this idea of substitution, or vicarious punishment, from any faithful representation of St. Paul's doctrine." (ibid p 92). Even when he demurs slightly that Paul always uses ὑπέρ 'on behalf of', and not ἀντί 'instead of', he nevertheless allows that the idea of substitution is required by the context. (e.g. Rom 8:3; Gal 3:13; II Cor 5:21). "There are, indeed, only a few passages which necessarily suggest the idea of substituted punishment, or substituted sacrifice. But there they are, and St. Paul's argument is unintelligible without them." (ibid p 94).

But Rashdall's own attitude is unchanged. While honest exegesis will not allow us to get rid of it, the idea of substitution or expiation "... is an idea which can be reconciled neither with the demands of the moral consciousness as interpreted by the modern intellect, nor with the plain teaching of St. Paul's Master and ours." (ibid p 98). He notes with manifest approval that Paul does not use the idea of punishment, and rarely employs definitely sacrificial language. His language is usually juridical. He never sees Christ's death as changing God's love, but rather all is due to God's love. In later epistles, claims Rashdall, the appeal to human love on the basis of this example of God's love looms larger.

So the basic motivation of Paul's thought becomes the same as that previously argued for the rest of the early church, the acceptance of the authority of the Old Testament. He has a conception of God's love for all, and is driven to find a theory which can accommodate that

love with his typically Rabbinic regard for the authority of scripture. Rashdall even suggests that Paul may have striven to reconcile a universalistic conception of God with the Old Testament before his conversion. The twentieth century liberal has no such problems. He sees that there is a basic contradiction between the Old and New Testaments, but whereas Paul agonises to reconcile them, the liberal theologian merely subordinates the first to the second.

In all this Rashdall argues that Paul really has Jesus' spirit and ideas at heart. Passages asserting the Christian's freedom from the law are found side by side with those which assert the necessity of Jesus' death to save man from the penalty of the law. There is an interesting section arguing that Paul was more influenced by the character, example and teaching of Jesus than is often allowed.[1] But the conclusion is that Paul was better than his theology. Given his background he had to reconcile the spirit and ideas of Jesus with the law, and this could only be done by using the, basically immoral, idea of substitution.

Turning to the question of the subjective appropriation of atonement, or justification, the condition as far as Paul is concerned is certainly faith. Rashdall knows this. But he also knows that the phrase 'justification by faith' has certain connotations historically, and that it can have a certain emotional and controversial ring about it. It is much loved and used by exponents of a theology very different from Rashdall's. It is hard to believe that Rashdall does not have this later history and bitter controversy in mind when he writes on Paul's doctrine of justification by faith. It is hard too to believe that he is not already preparing a little controversial material of his own. Already he seems to have in mind the attack he is going to launch on Luther and those whom he associates with him.

This seems to be the case from the beginning, with his definition of faith. "I think it cannot be denied that St. Paul does habitually identify faith with intellectual belief." (ibid

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1. The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology pp 106-108

p 108). In a footnote on this he writes "Faith (πίστις) never seems by St. Paul to be used in the sense of trust, except so far as trust is implied in believing the statements or promises of another." It is this idea that he develops. So he speaks of Abraham's faith as believing "various divine communications" (ibid p 109), and of Paul's understanding of Christian faith as a collection of beliefs about Jesus. Again we have the disconcerting trait, already noted, of following a dogmatic statement with a qualification so great that, if intended, it throws doubt on the meaning of the first statement. Thus he writes here "No doubt, to the deepest religious consciousness of St. Paul faith was much more than belief." (ibid p 109), and later he speaks of the apostle's "... religious insight ... and his personal experience of the effects which flowed from acceptance of Christ." (ibid p 121). But these qualifications seem to be at once withdrawn in such comments as "For St. Paul in his logical moments faith means belief" (ibid p 110), and, towards the end of this section, "... his theory of justification by belief..." (ibid p 121). It may be an unkind conclusion, but it seems to be the case, that Rashdall is aware that faith in Paul is a complex idea which usually means more than, though it includes, assent to truth, and that he prefers to understand it simply as intellectual belief.

Accepting that faith leads to justification, we must then ask whether justification means, as Protestant theology asserts 'to declare righteous', or, as Medieval and Roman theology would affirm 'to make righteous'. As far as the Greek is concerned δικαιόω means 'declare righteous'. For Paul its primary meaning is acquittal of those who are not yet in fact righteous. "So far the righteousness which is ascribed to them is (to use the technical term) an 'imputed', in other words an unreal righteousness." (ibid p 111). Perhaps thinking this is rather too sweeping, he adds a footnote "The word (ἐλογίσθη) does not necessarily imply that what is reckoned or imputed does not correspond with the actual fact. ... but when God is represented as 'not imputing to them their trespasses,' it clearly has the meaning of not taking account of their trespasses which really have been committed. There is, however, no trace of the characteristic Protestant notion that Christ's righteousness is imputed to us."

However God does not leave men unjust. Justification is necessarily followed by sanctification and the gift of the Spirit with adoption to Sonship by baptism. Hence there must be moral regeneration. "St. Paul does teach justification by faith without the works of the law, but never justification by faith without good works." (ibid p 114). These good works are an essential part of justification, and Paul speaks of a judgement of works (II Cor 6:10). "And thus at bottom the Catholic theory of justification finds more support in St. Paul, and is far nearer his real thought, than the Protestant theory in its strict traditional form. If grammatically and for the purposes of his quasi-juridical argument justification means counting righteous, practically it means for St. Paul a making righteous as well. Justification, in the sense of present forgiveness, may be by faith only, but not so ultimate salvation." (ibid p 116). Faith should always be accompanied by good works, and when Paul writes as if faith alone saves he is assuming a faith accompanied by such works. Yet his own letters show that faith is not always accompanied by works. Hence, Rashdall concludes, what Paul means is that it is not just faith, in the sense of belief, that justifies, but a faith that is accompanied by a transforming and active love. The teaching of Romans must be interpreted by I Corinthians 13. "When he recognises that there is a kind of faith so strong that it could remove mountains, and which is yet worthless in the sight of God because it is unaccompanied by charity, he is unsaying all that the letter of the Epistle to the Romans logically implies." (ibid p 117).

In other words, here as in the teaching on atonement there is a contradiction between the logical meaning of what is said and what Paul knows from his own experience. Again his argument is based on the Old Testament; such passages as the Septuagint mistranslation of Habakkuk 2:4 "the just shall live by faith"; the supposed precedent of Abraham; and Isaiah's declaration that "whosoever believeth on Him shall not be put to shame" (Isa 28:16. cf Rom 10:13). Thus he has attached the transforming power to faith alone when it should have been attached to faith accompanied by love. He does make the connection correctly at least once when he speaks of "faith working through love" (Gal 5:6), which Rashdall takes as the real core of his teaching. Thus he concludes, "The Protestant theory of

justification by faith - hardly perhaps the ultra-Protestant watchword 'Justification by faith only' - has on its side the letter of St. Paul's teaching. The scholastic distinction between an unformed faith (fides informis), mere intellectual belief, which saves not, and a perfected faith (fides formata) which saves because it produces love, comes far nearer to the deepest convictions of the man and to the teaching of His Master." (ibid p 120). As far as later ages are concerned, the spirit of St. Paul is a better guide than his time-bound Rabbinic theology.

General criticism of this will be made later, but it is worth noting here that Rashdall's limitation of Paul's understanding of faith to intellectual belief - which later becomes mere intellectual belief - is purely arbitrary. It is this limitation which makes necessary a number of later distinctions which would probably be unknown to the apostle, chiefly that between justification and sanctification. It is also this which leads, in Rashdall's view, to logical inconsistencies. A more flexible, or broader and more dynamic, understanding of faith, not making such a rigid distinction between Paul's formal theology and his religious experience with its outcome in sanctification would have avoided unnecessary problems.

Rashdall goes on to argue that in later epistles, when the controversies which produced Galatians and Romans had receded, the antagonism between faith and works is less marked and the need for something more than faith becomes more prominent. Philippians stresses the moral influence of Jesus' obedience to death, and speaks of the need for effort in the Christian life.(Phil 2:1ff; 2:12f; 3:12). Colossians has a strong assertion of the retrospective effects of Christ's death (Col 2:14), but throughout the epistle there is a stress on the knowledge which Christ gives (Col 3:16). Ephesians has an idealised picture of the church, which in some sense completes Christ himself (Eph 1:23). "The whole development exhibited in these epistles may be summed up by saying that the tendency is towards an insistence upon Christ's work as revelation rather than as retrospective atonement, and upon the moral effects of the revelation rather than upon the juridical acquittal which it effected." (ibid p 143). In other words there is a move away from the objective

view of atonement found in Romans.

For the purposes of this study it is not necessary to consider the rest of Rashdall's historical material in such detail. He argues that in the rest of the New Testament and the immediately post New Testament period a doctrine of atonement through the death of Christ is accepted. But it is accepted on the authority of the Old Testament, and there is no accepted rationale of how that death effected atonement. The idea of substitution is found, but normally Isaiah 53, or another prophecy, is in the background. The characteristic ideas of Romans exercised almost no influence. Any explanation of atonement which is suggested is in terms of subjective ethical and spiritual effects.

The chief New Testament support for atonement by revelation and enlightenment is found in the Johannine literature. Though the traditional formulae are used, and the death of Christ is seen as inevitable and mysterious, the chief atonement thinking is in terms of revelation through teaching and example leading to subjective change and obedience. Rashdall argues that there is no stress here on the saving effects of Christ's death, and particularly draws attention to the absence of the vicarious element in John 17. For the differences between Pauline and Johannine thought he has a simple solution, "... if we put out of sight everything in St. Paul which finds no echo in St. John, we shall be on the way to an appropriation of that central core of eternal truth which underlies them both. After all, the fundamental idea both of St. John and of St. Paul is simply that the death of Christ, the culminating act in a life of self-sacrifice, is the supreme manifestation of Christ's love, and therefore of the love of the Father whom He reveals; and that the contemplation of that life and death gives other men the power, as nothing else has done, to overcome temptation and to lead lives of love like His." (ibid p 184f). An important indication of Rashdall's own thinking, and a line of argument which he presses later, comes in his commendation of the fourth evangelist for not dividing the persons of the Trinity. "It is not too much to say that the worst developments of the atonement doctrine arose from the conception of a sharp separation between the three manifestations of God (not in St. John spoken or

thought of as three 'Persons') which would have been impossible to the author of the fourth Gospel." (ibid p 187).

Throughout the first one and a half centuries of the church's life, he suggests, the tendency is to a doctrine of salvation which is rational, ethical and spiritual. Christ's death was seen as somehow necessary, and the source of a power which was connected with ritual acts, especially baptism which was believed to carry "... an immediate and plenary remission of past sins." (ibid p 204). But as baptism followed public confession of faith and repentance, and was followed by the laying on of hands and prayer for the gift of the Holy Spirit, Rashdall can argue that the forgiveness was in fact attached to the repentance. Thus he can praise and thoroughly approve of the early teachings which, "...see in Christ's death the crowning and typical act in a life devoted to the teaching, by precept and example and character, of self-sacrificing love, ... Would that so much could be said of the later theories which have invited men to seek salvation by reliance upon the death of Christ and the deliberate repudiation of His teaching!" (ibid p 208).

It is hardly too much to say that he regards the subsequent history of the doctrine as a progressive falling away from this original purity and simplicity as men attempt to devise 'theories of atonement'. He understands the motives for the attempt, but regrets its effects. Though, naturally, he allows that from time to time light shines through the gathering darkness.

He clearly prefers the Greek tradition to the Latin one. On the whole the Greeks were more philosophical and spiritual. Rashdall would say they were also more ethical. They concentrated on the example and teaching of Jesus and tended to view the incarnation as a whole. Latin theology on the other hand was inclined to be legalistic. It tended to see atonement in objective terms, and to concentrate on the death of Christ to the virtual exclusion of His life and teaching. So Rashdall writes, "It is hardly possible to exaggerate the effects exercised on the development of theology by the circumstance that the Greek Fathers had been trained in the schools of Greek philosophy, while the education of the Latins had been for

the most part an education in Roman law, and, as I should be inclined to add, Roman rhetoric." (ibid p 248f), and later "To turn from the pages of Tertullian to those of the next great Christian theologian - Origen - is like emerging from a dimly-lighted Roman catacomb into the brilliant sunshine of a southern noon." (ibid p 255).

Yet he sees faults in Greek theology. While he thoroughly approves of incarnation and atonement being held closely together, he does not like the idea that the incarnation of the Logos should itself work atonement by somehow affecting the whole of humanity. Such a metaphysical, almost physical, transmutation of humanity by which incorruption is defeated he describes as pure myth. Though he admits that, in the classical form in which it was presented by Athanasius it is the normal teaching of Greek theology until the present. He is even more hostile to the idea of Christ's death as a ransom to Satan, especially when it is combined with crude ideas of deception.

But in the main Greek theology never loses its high ethical note, and the highest point is found in Origen. Rashdall tries hard, though perhaps unsuccessfully, to excuse Origen from the charge of having used the ransom theory in its usual way. In him, he claims, it was merely metaphorical, intended to express the great cost of redemption. The background was the ransom of prisoners taken in battle, not the juridical idea that payment made it 'fair' for God to redeem men from Satan, forgive sins, or cancel the death penalty. In any case this could be no more than a minor blemish in Origen's theology which should not be allowed to detract from his greatness, "... the general spirit of Origen is the spirit in which modern theology must be reconstructed; ... there is little in his doctrine of redemption which may not be appropriated almost unaltered by the modern theologian. ... The only way in which a bad man can justly be freed from punishment by a good and just God is by his being induced to repent and so to become actually good. Justification to Origen means simply the being made actually righteous." (ibid p 273). The rest of Patristic theology, at least on the atonement, is rated higher or lower according to whether it is near Origen, and thus ethical, or farther from him, and thus more objective and taking his metaphors seriously or literally.

Latin theology is treated far less sympathetically. Here juridical concepts are applied. What, in the East, had been at least partly metaphorical is taken as simple fact. Particularly is this true of the idea of ransom. Ideas which grew up in the realm of ecclesiastical discipline were transferred to the relations between God and man. "With Tertullian begins the degradation of repentance into 'penance'" (ibid p 254). This line of thought crystallises in the idea of Christ bearing punishment in our place to satisfy the justice of God.

As chief exponent of this type of thought, and most influential figure in Western theology until the Reformation, Augustine comes off rather badly at Rashdall's hands. While it is clear that most of his ideas come from Paul, he hardens them, giving the metaphors a hardness and literalness which they had not had before. This hardening is seen in his ideas of the Fall, original sin, election, and grace. More importantly it is seen in his doctrine of atonement. "... usually Christ's death is treated as a penal infliction endured by Christ instead of man; but still it is endured because justice requires that it should be endured." (ibid p 331). The punishment was just because Adam's sin had been inherited by his descendants.

In discussing this Rashdall brings together ideas of ransom, satisfaction and punishment. Previously he has shown that ransom at least need not be treated with the others. As a matter of fact satisfaction is not necessarily the same as punishment, though it can be used as if it were. However, Rashdall's implication is that, at least for Augustine, they were all reducable to the same idea - a substitutionary punishment - and they were thus accepted in orthodoxy. "The ransom theory was, as we have seen, questioned by a few Easterns. But in the West its ascendancy was undisputed till the twelfth century. It can be discovered more or less explicitly in nearly every writer of whose works there are any considerable remains." (ibid p 350).

Of the Medievals, Anselm is treated kindly. He provided an alternative to the idea of punishment, but he still uses basically the same juridical conceptions as Augustine. With Abelard Rashdall comes to his own theory, but we must reserve comment on this until

later. In any case it was basically Anselm's idea of satisfaction which was taken up by scholastic theologians to become the new orthodoxy. The great name here was that of Thomas Aquinas, though he was a great codifier not an innovator. Broadly he accepted Augustine's teaching on original sin and the need for grace. But grace is available, and with its help men can do good works and earn merit. Not that any were considered really worthy, but it is 'congruous' that good acts should be rewarded, even though it is only by the grace of God that they are performed. The performance of good works by a faithful man is the passing of his faith from '<u>fides informis</u>' - the raw material of faith, to '<u>fides formata</u>' - the formed faith which leads to justification because it produces good works.

Much in Scholasticism can and should be criticised. Rashdall criticises the idea of sacraments as channels of grace, the idea of indulgences, and the treasury of merit. He refers too to the differences within scholasticism. But with all its faults he sees it as "... a noble attempt to vindicate the rights of reason in religion, to fuse into the very fabric of the Church's doctrine the best elements of ancient thought, and above all, to assert that fundamental truth of Christianity - never perhaps up to the age of the Reformation formally denied, but often obscured - that the only faith which saves is the faith that produces love." (<u>ibid</u> p 392).

At this point Rashdall's historical survey is really over. When he turns to Luther he is concerned to paint a picture of the substitutionary theory of atonement against which he sets that of Abelard. Thus his portrait of Luther is little more than a caricature. He wants to see the Reformation as a good thing in that it got rid of ideas of satisfaction through ecclesiastical ordinances as necessary additions to repentance, and reduced the power of the clergy as dispensers of grace. Thus it cleared the way for a moral and free approach to God. But, "... the connexion of the Reformation and its blessings with the new doctrine of justification is little more than an accident of history, ... the real work of the Reformation was almost independent of this dogma. (<u>ibid</u> p 416).

Luther is notoriously easy to quote, and it is clear that his

more extreme sayings need to be corrected, or balanced, by being brought into relation with the rest of his theology. He was a passionate man, not over concerned with a formal logical consistency, and often enough careless of the offence that his words might cause. But perhaps his very passion gives him some advantage over his cooler and more logical critics. Rashdall himself, normally very cool, is not lacking in passion in his treatment of Luther. There is something almost hysterical about his eagerness to present the Reformer's position as grossly exaggerated and one-sided Augustinianism. A position contrary in every way to what Rashdall takes to be sound Christian teaching and the enlightened deliverances of the modern mind and moral consciousness. It is worth noting that many of his quotations come, through Denifle's '<u>Luther und Luthertum</u>', from an early commentary on Romans which Luther himself did not see fit to publish. Closer attention to such works as '<u>The Freedom of the Christian Man</u>', the sermon '<u>On Good Works</u>', or the treatment of the Ten Commandments in the Catechisms, might have yielded a different picture. As it is, while one recognises in Rashdall's treatment a good deal of Luther's teaching it is presented in a very biased way and it is mixed with a lot which, because of the way in which it is presented, is not Luther's teaching though his words are quoted.

The basis of Luther's teaching on atonement, says Rashdall, is substitution. "Indeed the idea of substitution - the idea that the Son was treated by the Father exactly as if He were guilty humanity - is now pushed further than it had ever been pushed before." (ibid p 399) The benefits of this work are received by faith, which Rashdall takes, wrongly, to be mere intellectual belief. "For him faith meant mere intellectual belief - that and nothing else." (<u>ibid</u> p 407). Man can do nothing of himself to achieve righteousness, but, by grace, the righteousness of Christ is imputed to him. Imputation and assurance are said to be the only new doctrines to be introduced by the Reformation. Rashdall is incensed by the idea of imputed righteousness. He attacks Luther with copious quotations. He cannot allow that justification should simply mean 'to declare righteous' and insists on the necessity of good works. Of Luther's position he writes, "On such a view it is clear that justification comes to mean nothing but a remission of guilt and the penalties of guilt - a

remission which can only be regarded as arbitrary, unintelligible, and, indeed, immoral. Well may St. Thomas declare that 'remission of guilt could not be understood unless infusion of grace followed.'" (ibid p 406). While it is admitted that Luther never actually taught a separation between Father and Son, or an opposition between the divine attributes of justice and mercy, it is argued that so much is said about the wrath of God apart from the work of Christ that such distinctions are encouraged.

The sum of it is that Luther is accused of encouraging confidence in dogmatic statements intellectually held, and of denigrating morality. "The God of Luther would have turned away sternly and coldly and angrily from the publican of our Lord's parable, because, though he repented, he came to God without the name of the Son upon his lips or the dogma of justification by faith in his mind." (ibid p 411). "His words sometimes amount to a formal contradiction of the Gospel: the assertion that our Lord had given a new commandment was rejected by Luther as Popish blasphemy. 'A new commandment I give unto you,' says the Gospel. 'Christ came not to set forth a new law,' says Luther. The difference is irreconcilable: the question whether the Church will side with Christ or with Luther on this fundamental question is one of the largest of the religious problems on which the Church of today has to make up its mind." (ibid p 412). In all this occasional references to Calvin suggest that his theology is more or less subsumed under Luther's.

Such a one-sided presentation of Luther could easily be criticised. The quotations in the preceding paragraph are just silly. Even Rashdall has to admit that many quite different passages from Luther could be quoted, and these he takes as unwilling assertions of the doctrine of 'fides formata'. However, to try to defend Luther would be to miss Rashdall's point. I believe, as I mentioned above, that this picture is a caricature. But behind it is the idea of substitutionary atonement as Rashdall understood it and as he believed it was held by people like Dale and Denney. He is not too concerned about Luther, it is this view of atonement he is attacking.

He admits that he has been criticising the substitutionary view

throughout the historical section of his work. "I have assumed, without much formal argument, that it is a view which, when once its nature is thoroughly appreciated, neither reason nor conscience can accept." (ibid p 420). Now he gives his formal criticisms. His expression of them is sometimes time-bound, but in essence he sets out the criticisms which have caused many, if not most, English theologians in the twentieth century to abandon the old 'orthodox position'. It will be as well, therefore, to state his arguments fairly fully, while remembering that, for much of the time, he has the arguments which we saw in Denney in mind. The last chapter and a half of his book are a combination of these criticisms and a commendation of the Abelardian view. But we must also bear in mind criticisms which he has made elsewhere. Hence what follows is not all from the last one and a half chapters, and is not in Rashdall's order.

His first criticism we have examined at some length. Substitution is not taught by Jesus. He did not attribute unique saving power to his death, nor did he put it at the centre of his teaching as some later theologians and theological systems have done. As far as Jesus is concerned, men need only to repent and seek that amendment of life which is an integral part of true repentance. Their forgiveness is then assured. Such teaching, though obscured by other views, remained dominant in the Greek Fathers and was rediscovered by Abelard.

Secondly, what he calls the Augustinian-Lutheran view rests on an attitude to scripture which is not possible for modern man. It involves accepting the literal historicity of Adam, and the passing on of Adam's guilt to his successors. Further it involves accepting the authority of the Old Testament, for it came about because the early Christians, especially Paul, found in the Old Testament scriptures reasons for the death of Christ which overcame the embarrassment which it had caused for their teaching. The modern age, Rashdall implies, would not be so embarrassed by the martyr-death of a great teacher. More important, the modern age has not only abandoned Paul's view of the authority of the Old Testament, it has also abandoned the idea of the authority of Paul himself on which 'orthodox' theologians based their acceptance of substitutionary atonement. "It is clear that if God never threatened to punish disobedience to His commands, either by

forfeiture of immortality or by everlasting torments, no scheme is required for reconciling forgiveness with the veracity of God. And if we deny the absolute and final authority of St. Paul, we have really no ground left for believing the theory to be true." (ibid p 421).

Thirdly, the substitutionary view involves an opposition between the wrath or justice of the Father and the love of the Son. This, says Rashdall, is contrary to the Biblical witness to a good and loving father eager to seek and to save all his children. It is also contrary to the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity. The popular view gives the impression of the Son as a separate being who had existed from all eternity beside the Father before he willed to come into human existence at the incarnation. But this is not what Catholic orthodoxy has understood by the 'Persons' of the Trinity. Indeed, as we saw in his treatment of the fourth gospel, Rashdall would prefer not to talk about 'Persons', but rather about 'manifestations' of God. Thus the incarnation and atonement - here he subordinates atonement to incarnation - must be presented as due to the loving will of the undivided Trinity.

Fourthly, the substitutionary view implies a retributive view of punishment. Such a view is based on primitive ideas of revenge and is not now highly regarded. Punishment must be for the good of the offender, not just directed to the offence which is now past. This was seen by Socrates and Plato, and was accepted by such Christian teachers as Clement, Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, and Abelard. Accepting the Christian ethic of love, punishment can only be inflicted if it is likely to produce good for the punished.

However Rashdall does not stop there. Even if retributive punishment is accepted - he notes J.K. Mozley as a modern theologian who maintains it - the punishment must fall on the guilty. If it falls elsewhere it is immoral. It is not enough to argue that blind justice simply demands that punishment should fall somewhere. He refuses to allow that the use of a vaguer term, such as expiation or satisfaction, is any more rational. He allows that satisfaction may be understood in a sense not involving punishment, but argues that "... as actually employed by medieval or Reformation theology, it

does at bottom involve the same fundamental immorality." (ibid p 423). In fact, as we noted above, Rashdall seems to make no real distinction between satisfaction and punishment.

Neither can the immorality of retributive punishment be evaded by appealing to some metaphysical unity of mankind, and then arguing that the suffering endured by Christ was in fact endured by humanity as a whole in Him. "... no juggling with universals will make it true to say that an individual who has in point of fact not been punished may nevertheless be deemed to have been punished." (ibid p 424). In any case, if Christ is said to be not 'a man' but 'generic humanity' that is inconsistent with asserting his real manhood. It is a version of this type of thinking when Dale stresses the union of the Christian with Christ and makes it so close that the believer may be said to have died when Christ died. This confuses objective statements of fact with subjective statements of influence. It shows in Rashdall's view the common confusion between 'salvation through a crucified Saviour', and 'salvation through the crucifixion of the Saviour'.

Fifthly, the substitutionary view has a false idea of faith and the object of faith. Faith, in this view, is limited to faith in Christ's death. It leaves out of account His life, teaching, example and resurrection. Furthermore, faith is treated as an arbitrary condition of salvation without regard to any moral effort on the part of the believer. We have seen in his treatment of Paul, and later of Luther, that Rashdall insists they both took faith to be mere intellectual assent to propositions, and that for him "No value or efficacy whatever can be attributed to the intellectual belief when it does not lead to such moral regeneration." (ibid p 427). In other words justifying faith is 'fides formata' not 'fides informis'. By taking faith in this sense it is possible to argue, as orthodoxy cannot, that those who, for whatever reason, have not arrived at intellectual belief may be justified if they show signs of moral regeneration and repentance, or hatred of past sins. We must, he argues, affirm the value of belief in Christ as the supreme revelation of God. "But let us equally avoid any mode of statement which suggests that those who have not heard the name of Christ, or who have,

from intellectual causes, been unable to accept the creed of His Church, are not also objects of that divine Love which received its most signal manifestation in Him." (ibid p 428).

If then, in view of these criticisms, the substitutionary view is to be abandoned, what theory of atonement is suitable for and acceptable to modern man? As Rashdall did, we have anticipated the answer on several occasions. The only view possible for modern man is the subjective one found in the Greek tradition and explicitly stated by Abelard. We see the full revelation of the love of God in a life which demonstrates the ethical ideal of union between the will of God and the will of man. The death of Christ is of a piece with his life and is no different in kind from any other martyr death. It shows the extent to which he is willing to go for his teaching and his love for men. Both in his teaching and in the extent of his love he is the supreme example. On man's side this revelation of love inspires such a response that men are moved to repentance and those good works which follow it. Thus their justification is made not only possible but inevitable.

Rashdall has very little to say about the means by which the revelation comes to men and has its effect. We have seen that the existence of a moral consciousness in man is a main plank in his argument, indeed a starting point for his theology. Apparently he believes that man, endowed with such a consciousness, must desire the highest when he sees it, and will thus inevitably respond to the revelation in Christ. He will be drawn by the noble example, convinced by the teaching, and moved by the love shown in the death.

For what are traditionally known as 'means of grace' he has scant respect. He never wrote on them at length though he touched on them in sermons. Here, as we might expect, he tried to keep as much as he could of the traditional language, chiefly, it seems, to avoid giving offence, while at the same time showing that it could be given a meaning acceptable to modern cultivated man. For example the Bible is not taken as in any sense a 'given' revelation. Revelation comes through man's reason and moral consciousness. The Old Testament is the story of an evolution of that consciousness among the Jews who

appear to have been the first great monotheistic people, though there were glimmers of monotheism elsewhere and these must also be taken as revelation. Jesus is simply the high point of this evolution which continues in others. "The history of revelation is simply the religious history of the world, as it presents itself to the real believer in a personal God, and a God revealed in a personal Christ, the history of the world as a history of gradual and progressive self-revelation to mankind." (Christus in Ecclesia, 1904, p 243).

He has no patience with sacerdotalism, or any setting apart of a body of men endowed with special authority or power as dispensers of grace. His passages on the priesthood of the laity could not offend the most sensitive or extreme Protestant conscience. The ordained ministry is little more than a convenience for the rest of the Christian community. They are set aside and trained for a special function, but have no peculiar relation to God. They are "... a special order invested with the authority of the whole community, and set apart by them to represent them ceremonially in worship, educationally in teaching, and practically in those general social functions of mercy and charity, of moral elevation and enlightenment, which are the business of no special profession, and in which the voluntary efforts of the general community require guidance and assistance." (ibid p 102).

As might be expected from this view, the sacraments become symbols by which the influence of Christ is portrayed and brought to bear on men. He will not allow that they are mere symbols, since no symbols are mere. He points out that all words are symbols, but are nevertheless powerful. Yet the point and importance of the symbol is not in itself but in that which it symbolises. "Symbols, then, are necessary, and to Christians no symbols can take the place of those which have been handed down to them by tradition from their Founder. And yet the value of the symbol disappears when attention is directed away from the meaning to the symbol itself;... " (ibid p 39). Seen in this way the Eucharist symbolises the teaching of Jesus, and baptism initiation into the community which accepts and lives by that teaching. Ideally baptism is for adults and is administered in the name of Jesus only, but in a Christian community - or at least a

community influenced by Christianity - Infant baptism is natural as children come in to the community.

The great and most significant means of grace for Rashdall is the church itself. Kirkby says of him that, though he disliked sacerdotalism, "... he was always a thorough ecclesiastic by instinctive feeling. It was the church as an historic and organic whole, with its ordered development of life and doctrine, the instrument of Christ's unique revelation, to which he was so deeply attached." (op cit p 486). He was active in ecumenical work, and his biographer quotes a number of letters to show that he was much loved and respected by the Free Church ministers of Carlisle. But he was thoroughly convinced of the value of a state church. It was the concern to keep church and nation together, rather than any specifically theological opinions, which made him such a loyal Anglican. He had a vision of the church as a community fired by the example of Christ, teaching and serving the world, and thus winning its allegiance to the moral ideals which were uniquely revealed in Jesus.

In the last pages of his work on atonement he suggests that the great dividing line between men will be between those who accept and those who reject Christ's ideal. The theologians task was to put the old formulae, which had made this plain to past generations, into modern language. In such language, "... the meaning of the Church's early creed, 'There is none other name given among men by which we may be saved,' will be something of this kind: 'There is none other ideal given among men by which we may be saved except the moral ideal which Christ taught by His words, and illustrated by His life and death of love; and there is none other help so great in the attainment of that ideal as the belief in God as He has been supremely revealed in Him who so taught and lived and died'." (The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology p 463).

Having seen an example of the more orthodox approach in Denney, and of the Liberal one in Rashdall, it should be possible to draw attention to certain strengths and weaknesses in the arguments.

It must be said in favour of Rashdall's view that it has the virtue of simplicity. If we assume that neither Jesus nor his church, at its best, has been primarily concerned with philosophers or those able to follow complex intellectual arguments, then this is a great virtue indeed. Nor should such an admission be regarded as 'selling the pass' or 'making the best of a bad job'. The Gospel is to be preached, and if the preacher's understanding of it, or statement of it, is so complicated that it cannot be understood without a higher education, then there is a '<u>prima facie</u>' case that he has got it wrong. The impression we have from the New Testament is that men could at least understand what Jesus and the apostles were saying, though they may not have agreed with it.

Further there is considerable New Testament support for Rashdall's stress on the love of God and the place of forgiveness and repentance in Jesus' teaching. While he has to omit some parts of the New Testament, and either amend other parts or treat them in a less than obvious way, the great parables showing God's concern to seek for his lost children and his readiness to welcome them back do, at least on the surface, lend themselves to the Abelardian interpretation. And, of course, Rashdall was not alone in beginning from this stress on God's love and its obvious human analogies. There is obviously an apologetic advantage here, particularly in an age which was keen to begin all its thinking from man. While Rashdall draws attention to the support his theory got from the Greek Fathers, he is clearly not unaware of many modern thinkers who shared his critical views of the substitutionary theory and preferred the subjective one.

Part of the advantage of beginning from man is the change which this brings about in the idea of God. One of the most interesting sections of Rashdall's work is his discussion on the passibility of God.[1] The idea of God as a loving father who is really hurt, and

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1. cf <u>The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology</u> pp 450-454.

who really suffers in the sufferings of his children has obvious appeal. It compares favourably with the bloodless notion of God as 'pure intelligence' or 'the unmoved mover' of Aristotelian thought, or with the severe forbidding judge that many took to be the God of orthodox theology. Rashdall sees that to suggest that God actually felt pain in the sufferings of Christ would raise the ghosts of many ancient controversies. But he believes that to interpret God in the light of the moral consciousness means believing that pain is possible for him. "... if God loves mankind, He must needs sorrow over human sin and human pain. ... A God who could contemplate such a world as ours without suffering would not be a loving God, nor would He be in the least like Christ." (ibid p 452f). Such a view seems to favour a subjective view of atonement, not one which sees it as some kind of transaction.

This leads to the greatest advantage of the subjective view in the opinion of many. It avoids the externality and supposed immorality of the traditional view. We have already seen Rashdall's criticisms of these points.

Finally we should note that any view of atonement that is genuinely Christian and in line with what we find in the New Testament must be, in some sense, subjective. If it does not become part of the believer's experience and a power in his life then it is hard to see how it could be called atonement in a Christian sense at all. At first sight this seems a strong argument in favour of the subjective view, but it can also come near to verbal juggling or deception. It is a mistake to allow one view of atonement to have a monopoly of the word subjective. No supporter of any other view would accept that his view was not intended to have some subjective power, or to get an internal hold on the believer. It is a real criticism of Rashdall's arguments that he implies that other views are merely external, and thus he gains an unfair emotional advantage for his own position.

However there are other criticisms. It is possible to criticise Rashdall's own arguments, and, perhaps more severely, to criticise his understanding of the view which he attacks. His Biblical arguments are weak. As we saw he begins with the synoptic gospels

and only allows two places where Jesus might be thought to suggest that his death had atoning value - the 'Ransom' saying (Mark 10:45), and the Last Supper sayings. Here one might criticise his arguments and his approach to the New Testament. By beginning with suggestions, in neither case very fully substantiated, that both places are textually suspect he seems to think that he has undercut his opponents' position before he begins. But other New Testament scholars do not make so much of the textual problems, and generally find more places where Jesus may have predicted his death as the important feature of his ministry. Denney, as we have seen, noted the 'Bridegroom' saying (Mark 2:19f) and the three 'Passion Predictions' (Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:33f), as passages which suggest that Jesus saw an inevitability in his death as part of his work.[1] Even if the reference of these passages to the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53 may seem a little more doubtful now than it once did, the element of inevitability still seems to be more suitable to a reference to a divine plan than merely to the suggestion that he expected the enmity of his opponents to lead to his death.

But, apart from looking at individual verses, one could consider what might be called the general presentation of Jesus in the New Testament. Here Rashdall's approach to the New Testament can be questioned. He approaches the synoptics as if they were attempted biographies written independently of faith, then approaches each other strand of the New Testament as if it were independent. In fact it is important to realise that all these documents were written within the believing community. It is wrong to suppose that in the synoptics one is nearer to cold historical fact. If then we find that all strands suggest that Jesus' death was part of his Messianic vocation, we should ask where such a belief is likely to have originated. Rashdall himself argues that a suffering Messiah and a Messianic interpretation of Isaiah 53 were not common in Jesus' day. It is at least likely therefore that such unanimity in putting forward such startling teaching is best explained as coming from Jesus himself.

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1. There are, of course, other passages; I have only mentioned the ones Denney uses. The best full discussion of the synoptic material is perhaps still V. Taylor: Jesus and His Sacrifice pp 82-200. A summary is in the same scholar's The Atonement in New Testament Teaching pp 13-17.

It is not easy to know how one should deal with Rashdall's treatment of Paul. He candidly admits that substitution is central to the apostle's thought, but this has little bearing on his own ideas of atonement since he does not think it necessary to accept Paul's authority. Again one might suggest that there is an element of cheating in Rashdall's presentation of his case. He suggests, as we noted, that the Augustinian-Lutheran view rests on the literal historicity of the Adam story and on the plenary authority of Paul, then he dismisses both. In fact to suggest that any part of scripture is not historical is not necessarily the same as to reject its authority. Given that Paul may have accepted Genesis as literal history, and there is evidence that this was not always the case among the Rabbis, his authority is not dependent on the historicity. As a matter of fact the New Testament shows that the apostles claimed the authority of inspiration for their teaching, and had that claim accepted by the church (cf 1 Cor 2). The Gospel was preached before it was written. The Gospels were written to support the preaching; the preaching was not meant to explain previously written gospels - taken as historical records - and should not be subordinated to them. Thus the centrality and primacy of the substitutionary view of atonement should not be so easily set aside.

Two other criticisms could be made of Rashdall's treatment of St. Paul. First, it is by no means certain that one can separate Paul the religious man from Paul the theologian. Neither should one argue that since justification by faith only appears in a more or less worked out form in Romans and Galatians, where there is a controversial or dogmatic aim, it is somehow unimportant when the demands of controversy or dogmatic definition are not present. In fact one could turn the argument and point out that at the very place where Paul feels that he must state his theology with particular clarity <u>there</u> we have this doctrine, must it not therefore be of paramount importance. But it is somewhat midleading, though formally true, to say that Romans and Galatians are different in this respect. The objective view of the death of Christ as an atonement, on which justification by faith is based in Romans and Galatians, is also clearly found in II Corinthians 5:14-21; Philippians 3:4-9; and Colossians 2:14f.

A more important criticism, which leads us beyond his treatment of Paul, is Rashdall's treatment of faith as 'mere intellectual assent'. It may be that in later Protestant formulations of the theory, perhaps in some Puritan divines, there was a danger that faith should be seen in that way, but this seems to be a complete misunderstanding of Paul and of Luther. It must be said that in neither is faith mere intellectual assent, and neither has it been so in the Reformation tradition at its best. They did not think of the Gospel as something which was presented for man's consideration. It was not seen as a system of belief, a way of regarding the world which could be cooly weighed up and compared with alternatives. Neither Paul nor Luther was as dispassionate as that. Both could be said to have preached the Gospel - as they received it - as a message to dying men. It was an urgent matter which called their entire personality into question and demanded a response from their whole being, not simply their intellect. In modern terms it was existential.

When faith is seen in this way the distinction between justification and sanctification falls away. In any case it could only be made for the purpose of academic discussion. As we have seen Denney refused to separate them. It could be, then, that Rashdall has been too intellectual and has ascribed his own way of thinking to his opponents. The whole distinction between 'fides informis' and 'fides formata' would be foreign to the tradition which Rashdall is criticising. They would say that the distinction implies a limited understanding of faith, whereas for them, in Luther's words, "It is a living, busy, active, powerful thing - faith; it is impossible for it not to do us good continually. It never asks whether good works are to be done; it has done them before there is time to ask the question, and it is always doing them." But such works, in this tradition, never become the ground of justification. Man never reaches a position where he has a claim against God.

More importantly, those of the Reformed tradition would argue that Rashdall has a limited, indeed a superficial, understanding of the human predicament. This perhaps is the chief criticism of Rashdall and the tradition which he represents. One feels that he has not yet considered how serious a thing sin is. Certainly he has

not the same impression of sin and its relation to the holiness of God as his opponents. With them it is seen as a deep and radical breach of relationship between man and God which turns into active rebellion. They have a sense of the solidarity of the race against God. They are conscious of a moral disintegration which is somehow wider than human but which in human terms is seen in man's inability to desire the highest when he sees it. It is this overwhelming consciousness of the holiness of God and the seriousness of sin which finds expression, however inadequately and with whatever mythological overtones, in the idea of the Fall and the sense of a need for an objective act outside of man, an act of God himself, to restore the broken relationship.

Ideas such as this are difficult to express and perhaps impossible to convey to those who seem unfamiliar with the sense of them. Rashdall seems to be a stranger to them. For him all that is needed is the right sort of teaching, repentance, and the promise that one will be forgiven if one's repentance is sincere and expressed in moral effort. He has the same vocabulary as his opponents, but he does not seem to have taken account of the costliness of forgiveness, or the difficulty amounting to impossibility of self-produced repentance, as they would understand these things. When he goes on to speak of man performing works suitable for justification, as if man had within himself, in his own moral consciousness, the power not only to recognise his need but somehow to make up for it, he is living in a different world from that of his opponents. It is difficult also to resist the impression that it is a more superficial world, and that he has hardly taken his own starting point - in the moral consciousness - sufficiently seriously. This point is well made by Forsyth, "Conscience which, going some way, makes many heroes, going to the end, makes cowards of us all. It ends by accusing more than inspiring, and it cannot forgive. It repents, but the penitent conscience cannot forgive. The good man can never forgive himself. Conscience will give us sound footing up to a point, till it rouse the sense of the holy, and then it creates in us the passion for forgiveness as life's one need. But no conscience of ours can either forgive us or assure us of the forgiveness of God, the grace of the Holy." (P.T. Forsyth: The Principle of Authority p 182). In this

situation much more is needed than teaching and example. Indeed, one could argue that teaching and example would be mere cruelty if there were nothing more.

Similarly, the death of Christ as a display of love does not seem to bear any meaningful relationship to man's actual situation as Rashdall's opponents saw it. This is the point which was made in Denney's illustration quoted above.[1] If somebody throws himself from a pier as a demonstration of love for me this is pointless and unhelpful unless it bears some relation to my need. Rashdall takes up this point and quotes Denney's illustration at length.[2] He argues that the illustration has missed the point of the Abelardian theory, and has even misrepresented the view which Denney seeks to defend. But this confuses the issue. It is true that the Abelardian theory does not present Jesus as committing suicide, and that the substitutionary theory demands more than that he should be a kind of life-saver. However Rashdall has made the mistake of criticising Denney's analogy rather than the point he was trying to make by it. The point was that there must be a connection between the death of Christ and man's actual need. Thus when Rashdall changes the story and suggests that it would better represent the Abelardian view if one imagined Jesus approaching the person sitting on the pier and saying, 'To show my love for you, I will allow myself to be thrown into the sea by those who have threatened to do so unless I abandon my work of preaching what I believe to be the truth of God, of preparing the way of His Kingdom and for your admission thereto,' he has not met the point. Such an attitude - overlooking the melodramatic air forced upon it by the illustration - might well be inspiring, but Denney's whole point is that such inspiration is not enough. It is admitted that part of Jesus' work was teaching and revelation, but Denney, and those whom he represents in Rashdall's eyes, would say that that is not enough, and if his death is not related to man's need the lack is not made up.

This superficiality of Rashdall's was well expressed in a review of his book by John Oman. "So far as he goes he is wholly right, ...

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1. cf supra p 71. The Death of Christ p 127
2. cf The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology pp 439-443

But when one compares him with St. Paul, or even with Luther, one realises how little he cares to live in the half lights, and how all the really creative souls have had to live there all their time. His quite astonishing lucidity is sometimes at least due to his natural aversion from the dim vistas of man's spiritual horizon." (J.T.S. Vol XXI, 1920, p 270). It is in the half lights of these dim vistas that the exponents of the objective view are forced to their apparently contradictory language.

Strangely it is when his opponents have suffered from the same sort of aversion that Rashdall's case seems strongest. There is no doubt that the orthodox position has often been stated too clearly. Thus it has given the impression of an external transaction, a matter of the transfer of amounts in a kind of spiritual book-keeping. It is this sort of thing that Rashdall attacks. A similar type of thinking is behind his attack on the retributive view of punishment. Discussing this theory elsewhere he criticises F.H. Bradley, who defended it in a modified form, on the grounds that he "... actually gives up the doctrine that the amount of punishment should correspond with the amount of the offence, while still maintaining that punishment in general is justified only by past sin, not by future advantage." (The Theory of Good and Evil 1907 Vol 1 p 287). In other words he believes that Bradley has given up the idea because he does not speak about amounts. In fact, however, the defenders of substitutionary views of atonement have not, at their best, thought in terms of amounts.

In all his criticisms Rashdall does not seem to have noticed that the best of his opponents see the problems to which he draws attention, but that they also see far more than this, and think that, in spite of difficulties, substitutionary language remains the best available. They expose themselves to criticism because they try to do justice to the complexity of the issues. Thus it is that Rashdall seems able to 'score points' against Denney, and even more against Dale, but only because his own treatment of the situation is more superficial. Denney too locates the origin of atonement in the love of the Father. He does not want to separate the Father and the Son, or speak in terms of an opposition between the justice and mercy of

God. But he does want to do justice to the complexity of the problem and the depth of Christian experience. In doing so he lays himself open to criticism, but he has at least made the attempt.

It is interesting in this respect that Rashdall prefers to direct his criticism of contemporary writers towards Dale and Denney. Both of these write clearly and generally unphilosophically. This is most true of Dale, and he suffers most at Rashdall's hands. But even with Denney, though one may feel that Denney is often right, one feels too that Rashdall can handle him intellectually, at least on the philosophical level. The exponent of the traditional position with whom Rashdall never comes to terms is Forsyth. Less clear as a writer than Denney, Forsyth was probably a more powerful intellect and certainly he was more able to handle philosophical questions. Rashdall mentions him as a defender of the substitutionary view, but only quotes a minor work.[1] But Forsyth was a most discerning and devastating critic of the sort of appeal to man's best and highest moral aspirations which is so well illustrated by Rashdall. We may conclude this section with a long quotation which, though written years before Rashdall's work on atonement, could have been directed to it.

"Is it not very striking that the deadly foes of Christ were men who believed passionately in creed, conduct and charity? His slayers were people who believed to the death in God and in forgiveness, in alms to the poor, and in sympathy to the sorrowful. God was their passion, righteousness their watchword, redemption their grand hope, and benevolence nothing less than a sacrament. Such was Pharisaism. So much it had in common with Christ. The deadly conflict was not about monotheism, pardon, nor philanthropy. But it was about a matter which has sunk with us to a mere theologoumenon outside 'simple Bible teaching'; it was about the terms of forgiveness. There lies the essence of Christianity. The Pharisee said salvation was a justificatio justi, his vindication. The righteous were forgiven their shortcomings out of regard to the matters on which they did not come short. Just as we say that the good side of

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1. cf The Idea of Atonement in Christian Theology p 495f

human nature will at last submerge and justify the rest. But Christ said it was a justificatio injusti, a forgiveness unaffected by the good in the sinner, and wholly due to the free grace of God, a grace as free, unbought, undeserved, and inexplicable as the original choice of Israel. For Christ no less than for Paul the whole Christian issue turned on this grace of God to wickedness, not on mere mercy to failure; and it was not for a loving God merely, but for a gracious God He died. If we let that go, no gospel of love alone will save us from Pharisaism, which will come by the way of Catholicism and its semi-Pelagian humanism. And to let it go theologically is nothing to letting it go practically as so much of our usage is. A study of Pharisaism on its best side greatly clears the real Christian issue. And we have abundant documents for it in much current religion which denounces Pharisaism with freedom and effect." (L.Q.R. Vol CVI, Oct. 1906 p 200. A footnote to an article entitled The Church's One Foundation).

V. JOHN OMAN (1860-1939)

With Oman we come to the most difficult, though perhaps the most influential, of the theologians included in this study. Reading Oman is difficult in two ways. The most important is the nature of his thought and its method, quite different from either Denney or Rashdall. The second is the style of his writing. Style here does not mean simply such things as choice of words or sentence construction, though both of these were, to put the matter most kindly, distinctive. We also have to deal with a very discursive manner of pursuing an argument. This is probably characteristic of his method of thought, so the two problems are necessarily interwoven.

To comment on the second difficulty first, it is noticeable that most readers of Oman, friends and critics alike, draw attention to the difficulty of his style. Though it is often implied that the style covers, and is partly excused by, profundity of thought. Thus, on the issue of a second edition of 'Grace and Personality' (1917; 2nd Edition 1919; 3rd Edition 1925), J.K. Mozley wrote, "... despite many vivid phrases which it contains it is not an easy book to read; it demands continuous attention and not only steady but luminous thinking; ... If such a book succeeds it can only be because it deserves to succeed." (J.T.S. Vol XXI p 349). Years later, of Oman's work as a whole, Mozley wrote, "Easy he is not; nor is he always lucid; but he is always going down to the roots of the matter, and he is the enemy a outrance of anything that seems to him unreal." (Some Tendencies in British Theology 1951 p 161). Of 'The Natural and the Supernatural' (1931), W.R. Matthews wrote, "It cannot be said that the book is easy to read. It must be studied and not skimmed, but the argument is constantly relieved by flashes of epigram,..." (C.Q.R. Vol 114 p 311). A.D. Lindsay regretted that "Some of what Professor Oman has written in the past has been so difficult to read that it has baffled when it should have illuminated,..." (J.T.S. Vol XXXIII p 388), though he felt that 'The Natural and the Supernatural' was very different. A pupil and admirer H.H. Farmer comments "His diction is sometimes obscure to the point almost of exasperation; this is partly due no doubt to the depth and originality of his thought ... but it may be

partly due also to some failure in imaginative sympathy with the mind of the reader. He has a way of omitting what were no doubt to him, with his grasp of the subject, obvious steps in the argument, leaving the reader to supply them as best he can. He seldom precisely defines his terms, but rather leaves their import to be discovered from the use he makes of them, which is sometimes not very easy to do." (Theologians of Our Time: John Oman, E.T. Vol LXXIV p 134). Farmer suggests he may have benefitted from the semantic discipline applied by linguistic philosophers. Finally, another student, F.G. Healey, in a not over-critical account of Oman's theology, is obliged to admit, "It is true that, as with other original thinkers, one has to get acclimatised to Oman's style. ... He used abstract nouns perhaps more than was necessary, and the interpretation of them sometimes wearies or baffles the reader. In the use of 'it', Oman was not always strictly grammatical. He discriminated between words commonly used interchangeably (for example, 'morals' and 'ethics'; 'origin' and 'beginning'; 'looking' and 'seeing') but sometimes forgot to use them in the exact way he had proposed." (Religion and Reality: The Theology of John Oman, 1965 p 3). Later, on 'Grace and Personality', the work which should most obviously bear on our subject, Healey comments, "The book was worked over several times in order to meet criticisms, including the charge of obscurity. One result is a repetitiousness which does not always make the argument easier to follow. Another is that qualifications, in the form of subordinate clauses, have on occasion been added to sentences at such length as to strain attention overmuch." (ibid p 46).

In Oman's defence one might point out that he often has parables and illustrations which enliven his work. The fact that these occur with greater frequency in later works suggests that he was sensitive to the criticisms made of his style. It is also worth noting how frequently comments on style pass over into comments on content, or manner of thought, or both. Towards the end of the last chapter we pointed out that there are ideas and lines of thought which cannot be expressed simply without distortion. These are the thoughts with which Oman wrestles. He made this point himself in the preface to the third edition of 'Grace and Personality' (1925). Having remarked that he has tried to make the argument plainer, he goes on, "Yet I am

under no illusion in thinking that the work is, much more than before, in the realm of light literature, which he who runs may read. Of that, apart from my own limitations, a subject which has occupied the mind of many thinkers, throughout many centuries, does not admit: nor is it possible to spend a lifetime largely in their company without some evil communication from their abstruseness." (op cit p x).

But style is not the whole of the problem. Oman's work proceeded on the basis of a certain world-view, indeed it could be said that his theology was never more than an elaboration of that world view. The view itself, briefly the affirmation of a supernatural realm which is not distinct from the natural but must be found in and through the natural, is perhaps not so much odd as difficult to state with any clarity. What is involved is a total attitude, and Oman considered his task to be the articulation and justification of that attitude. Further, it had to be affirmed against an intellectual background which was not particularly congenial to it. In that he takes that uncongenial background very seriously, seeking to meet its genuine objections to traditional Christianity as well as trying to show its weaknesses and limitations, he is perhaps nearer to Denney and Rashdall than is at first apparent. Though his own position is quite different from theirs.

Oman was born in the Orkneys. Occasional passages in his work show the influence of a childhood spent in a home of simple, though stern, Calvinistic piety, and a life lived in close contact with the sea and land. After attending Edinburgh University and spending several semesters in German universities, he was ordained into the Presbyterian ministry. From 1889 to 1907 he was minister of the Presbyterian church in Alnwick in Northumberland. In 1907 he was called to the Chair of Systematic Theology and Apologetics at Westminster College Cambridge. He remained at Westminster, becoming Principal in 1922, until his retirement in 1935.

Thus he lived and wrote throughout the period of Liberalism and on into the neo-orthodox revival. In the preface to his last book 'Honest Religion', published posthumously in 1941, he speaks of living through the rise and fall of four 'Schools' of Gospel criticism.

Strangely he mentions no comparable movements in dogmatic theology. He knew the influences which led to Liberalism, but he witnessed also the tragedies of the 1914-18 war which marked the end of its optimistic utopianism. Hence he can write sympathetically, even wistfully, of the full churches and honest kindly liberalism of the late Victorian and Edwardian ages, while realising the weaknesses of the underlying theology.[1]

He argued in several books that the chief breach in Christian thought came not at the Reformation but with eighteenth century rationalism. The Reformation had divided the church, but it was still possible to speak of authorities which demanded obedience, whether it was the Church or the Bible. Rationalism rejected all 'external authoritative infallibilities', asserting the importance of individual freedom of judgement and exalting the place of reason. This in turn led to a mechanistic view of the universe as obeying certain inexorable laws. With the addition of evolutionary ideas of progress, and the undermining of the Bible by historical criticism the old religious order, even of post-Reformation Christians, had passed.

Oman wrote of all this as early as his '<u>Vision and Authority</u>' (1902), and set out the course of the change in great detail in his Kerr Lectures '<u>The Problem of Faith and Freedom</u>' (1906). The movement was quite irreversible, and in any case did not appear to him as an unmitigated disaster. He was not anxious to re-establish the old form of trust in the Bible, or to re-establish the church as an external authority. The Rationalist spirit had made advances and, as far as it went, it was true. But it was not the whole truth. Its air of superiority in assuming it could replace all that was true in past ideas by its own unaided intellect was its great weakness. Its strength was its stress on the freedom of individual judgement and the assertion that nothing was true for any man unless he saw it and accepted it as true for himself.

The stress on man's freedom and personal responsibility - with the sense both of ability to respond, and liability to judgement if

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1. cf <u>Honest Religion</u> chap 1.

he failed to respond - is characteristic of all Oman's writing. In his first major independent work he wrote "The supreme task is to establish freedom upon that impelling necessity which a man's own spiritual vision can alone impose." (Vision and Authority p 22). And in his last work we find the same theme, "In religion we must be as bold, as free, as honest, as prepared to face all realities as in science or philosophy. Slavery to tradition, fear of inquiry, submission to institutions are not religion but the want of it, not faith but unbelief. The difference is only in the sphere in which honesty is exercised, religion being the sphere in which we are ever reaching out beyond what eye has seen." (Honest Religion p 51).

In this attitude Oman was a Liberal. Facing the challenge of an unbelieving science and philosophy he did not, like Denney, appeal back to the Bible, nor, like Rashdall, take his bearings from modern cultivated man. But he sought to press through the easy liberalism of many others and correct its stress on immanence by a recovery of transcendence. Horton Davies says of him, "Oman never ceased to be a liberal in theology, but he was a chastened liberal who considered it to be his task to rescue the older and discarded theological terms and to fill them with contemporary relevance." (op cit p 158). He did this not by criticising piece-meal but by bringing forward a complete world view.

He remarked himself, and the comment has been elaborated by Farmer,[1] that he had in a sense worked backwards in his theological writing. From the beginning he accepted that there was an unseen supernatural realm or aspect of the world, and that men may encounter it by a right working, thinking and seeking in the natural realm. This assumption lies behind his earlier works but is not worked out in full until 'The Natural and the Supernatural' in 1931. We must try to set out this view, but should notice first certain obvious objections to this whole method of approach.

There is the suspicion that talk of a supernatural realm encountered through the natural is a relapse into subjectivism. With this goes the fear that it does not do justice to the Divine initiative. The concept of Divine initiative came to the fore again in theology

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1. cf op cit p 133

through the work of Barth and his followers. It is reasonable to suppose that Oman was aware of this school of thought though he does not, as far as I know, refer to it. In English theology this approach was represented, as we have seen, by Denney, and, more forcibly, by Forsyth. Such people stress the importance of beginning from grace rather than nature, from what makes us Christian rather than from what makes us religious.

Oman seems to reverse this order. He is much more inclined to speak of religion than of Christianity, though he certainly did not think the two are always the same. In the preface to the second edition of '<u>Grace and Personality</u>' he gives as the presupposition of the enquiry, "... that, in Religion, as in all other subjects, truth can only rest securely on the witness of the reality to itself, and that, in religion, more than in any other subject, it must be a witness to ourselves." (<u>op cit</u> p viii). Later, in the body of the book, he comes to deal with the relation between human autonomy and divine grace and asks, "How shall we ask? Is it to be in the old way of arguing down from the throne of God, of propounding what seems to us fitting in the relation of an Infinite Being to His finite creature, or is it to be upward from the actual position we occupy here below?" His answer is, "Only if we can see grace as it works on earth and understand it as it affects our own experience, can we possibly hope to have either clearness or certainty." (<u>op cit</u> p 40).

On the surface then it seems he is open to the charge of subjectivism and neglecting the divine initiative. Oman himself does not consider these points, but his pupils have pointed out that if the supernatural realm is <u>there</u>, outside of us, it cannot then be merely an inner subjective state of mind. Further he does speak of God seeking men through, or in, the supernatural environment. It could be argued that he clearly respects the Divine initiative by beginning his discussion of grace from what God has already done in man.[1] Farmer insists that, though Biblical quotations are rare, "His was a Biblical theology, though not in the narrow and exclusive sense in which that term is today sometimes used." (<u>op cit</u> p 134).

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1. cf Healey <u>op cit</u> p 67f.

A more important variant of the same question concerns the place of the person and work of Christ in the relation between the natural and the supernatural. Whereas in Denney and Rashdall Christ is very much at the centre of the stage, though in different ways, he is not obviously so in Oman. Of course, mere space, the number of words or pages used, is no guide to the importance of any theme in a man's work. Yet the shift of emphasis is very noticeable, and one could get the impression that Oman is not dealing with the same problems as the other writers mentioned.

It could be replied that Oman did not pose the questions in the usual way and so did not present the answers in the usual way. He might have suggested that his contemporaries were not raising the questions of the person and work of Christ in the traditional forms. For most of his work he seems to assume the work of Christ and its summation in the cross. In other words he is writing from within the church and is more concerned with issues which arise in Christian thought and experience after the work of Christ has been acknowledged and its benefits received. Then '<u>The Natural and the Supernatural</u>', which more than any other major work might be seen as directed to the honest enquirer outside the church, is more a work of philosophy of religion than of systematic theology. If this sort of argument is allowed, at least provisionally, his work can be more sympathetically interpreted. Yet this has a ring of special pleading. The objections raised always hang over his work and we must return to them later.

What then was his world view, and how does he arrive at it and defend it? His arguments were first set out in an article '<u>The Sphere of Religion</u>' contributed to a symposium '<u>Science Religion and Reality</u>' (1925), but were more fully explicated in '<u>The Natural and the Supernatural</u>', of which the earlier essay virtually forms the first section. Therefore we can limit our attention to the later work.

Briefly it is a philosophy of religion in four parts. The first argues that religion, and particularly religious experience, is not to be explained away but is in fact a response to the Supernatural realm which is <u>there,</u> open to all, and, to some extent, experienced by all. Secondly he argues against the 'Naturalism' and 'Rationalism' of his

day. He complains that it has omitted the supernatural realm from its thinking by failing to recognise any genuine knowledge apart from the abstractions of scientific explanation. In the third section, still arguing with his contemporaries, he criticises the mechanistic world view which sees only cause and effect, and omits not only ideas of freedom but a good deal of the richness of spiritual life. In the last section, assuming that he has established the existence of the supernatural realm, he classifies religions according to how they handle the relationship between the natural and the supernatural. While it will not be necessary to follow the detail of his arguments, where he has many digressions and is occasionally time-bound, this world view is so very important for his understanding of the relation of God and man and the concept of grace that we must pick out its main points.

The first concern is to establish that religious experience witnesses to the existence of something real, that there is a supernatural with which man comes in to contact. After considering some attempts so to explain religion as to explain it away, he turns to an important analysis of religious experience, that is of our knowledge of the religious or supernatural environment. "If", he writes, "religion is an actual experience of an actual environment, we can only hope for an answer as to what that environment is by asking with all our knowledge and capacity how it environs us." (The Natural and the Supernatural p 57). This environment, he claims, is known basically in the same way as any other. We know any environment from its witness to itself in a fourfold way. First from the character of the feeling it creates; secondly the unique value or worth it has for us; thirdly, and inseparably from its value, the sense of its objectivity; fourthly there is the necessity to think the experience in relation to the rest of our experience and the rest of our experience in relation to it. Of course, such a division is only for convenience of discussion. In experience the four aspects are united. He now goes on to discuss them as they apply to religious experience.

The first he calls the 'Holy'. This is at once reminiscent of Rudolph Otto and his stress on the numinous as an overpowering sense of awe or dread - the 'mysterium tremendum et fascinans'. Oman was

aware of Otto's work. He has a short appendix on it in '<u>The Natural and the Supernatural</u>'[1] and he wrote an article review on the English Translation of Otto's Book '<u>The Idea of the Holy</u>'.[2] But he is critical of Otto's argument that the sense of 'awe', the awareness of some 'other', is the one essential of religious feeling. For Oman this does not go far enough. He refers to it as 'the awesome holy', or the 'undifferentiated holy', it is mere feeling without ethical content. It is not that which he has in mind when speaking of genuine religious experience. That feeling must be combined with, and interpreted by, the second aspect of the experience, its valuation as of worth for us. This he calls the 'Sacred'.

In judging something to be sacred we are recognising it as of imcomparable worth. If we ask how this particular valuation compares with pleasure, or ease, or prosperity, it has ceased to be really sacred for us. As with 'Holy' the valuation of the 'Sacred' can be embodied in low forms, such as idols, sacred groves, trees or other symbols of religion. This Oman takes as a characteristic of primitive religion. It is a tendency to 'fixed ideas'. In other words man tends to limit, or locate, the source of his experience of the sacred in the place where the experience took place, or in an object in connection with which it took place. It is a mark of religious development that the experience, and the sense of value which came with it, can be detached from any material location or vehicle. Thus it becomes a 'free idea'.

These two aspects of the experience - the sense of the 'Holy', and the valuation of 'Sacred' - depend upon the third, the sense of objectivity. This he calls the 'Supernatural'. As the sense of the 'Holy' needs the valuation of 'Sacred' before it becomes, in his view, a genuine religious experience, so both point to and depend upon the existence of a real supernatural order which evokes them. The <u>sphere</u> of religion is neither the feeling, nor the value, but the environment known by means of them. "... in the end the validity of religion depends neither upon the feeling of holiness nor upon the judgement of sacredness, but upon the reality to which these belong

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1. cf <u>op cit</u> p 471ff
2. cf <u>J.T.S.</u> Vol XXV pp 275-286.

- the existence of the Supernatural. ... As here used, the Supernatural means the world which manifests more than natural values, the world which has values which stir the sense of the holy and demand to be esteemed as sacred." (ibid p 71). The Supernatural cannot be simply distinguished from the Natural, they are interwoven. The Supernatural comes to us through and with the Natural.

Finally this experience must be thought together with the rest of man's experience, and the rest of experience with it. This is the task of 'Theology'. As we have seen he insisted that Theology should begin from man's experience. It proceeds on the assumption that the Supernatural is real and, since we have as much right to believe that man's mind is in the image of the Supernatural, as to believe that it is in the realm of the Natural, it assumes that right thinking and sincerity in searching for the truth will be rewarded. The reference to 'sincerity' here is important. Oman sees more in the mind than mere rationality. The approach to Theology, he frequently insists, must be made 'honestly'. By that he seems to imply a willingness, and an ability, to respond to the higher aspirations of beauty, truth and goodness which are valued as sacred.

In such an analysis of religious experience, and in the quest for truth to which it leads, Rationalism is not so much by-passed or overturned as superseded. By laying down its methods of inquiry beforehand Rationalism ruled out the Supernatural, because the Supernatural could not be fitted in to its limitation of all things to the measure of what it considered scientific method. However, to be truly scientific, every field of enquiry must be allowed its own methods, and this rule applies to enquiry into the Supernatural realm. "But it is evident that the witness of a sphere which is mainly concerned with what ought to be cannot be the same as that of a sphere which is wholly concerned with what is. ... If this is a higher reality, which is seeking to reveal itself through our whole experience in this present world, it requires us to reach out after our farthest vision and follow even the dimly discerned beckoning of its requirements, as they speak to us of what is beyond demonstration and only discerned in moments of deeper insight and higher concentration." (ibid p 109).

If then religious experience leads us to posit the reality of the Supernatural realm, and, at the same time urges us to seek to 'think it', we might ask how can we know about this realm? At this point one might expect the introduction of the ideas of revelation and the work of Christ. We get neither in the usual way. In a sense he does go on to speak of revelation but it is not yet connected with Jesus. What we have is rather a religious epistemology. As Farmer has written "Oman's whole argument certainly assumes, as all his writings do, that there is in his reader some direct sense, or at least the capacity for it, of the supernatural environment;..." (op cit p 133). He now articulates the capacity for knowledge of the Supernatural.

He speaks of four types of knowing and illustrates them with a parable. While walking in a dreamy mood along a country road we may have a quite vivid sense of all that is about us without concentrating on anything in particular. This he calls awareness. We may then become conscious of one particular object, say a man riding a bicycle, and concentrate our attention upon that. This he calls apprehension. If we have never previously seen a man riding a bicycle we ask what it is and after a time realise that it is a means of locomotion. This he calls comprehension. Finally we ask how it is that the bicycle remains upright and is propelled along, and find the answer by applying the appropriate scientific and mechanical rules. This he calls explanation. (ibid p 120ff).

In these four types of knowing there is a gradual narrowing of the scope of perception. The scientist is concerned only with the last two, comprehension and explanation. These have obvious value for helping man to utilise his natural environment, but the scientist is inclined to go on to say that these two alone are real knowledge. This, thinks Oman, is a mistake. In fact the first two types, awareness and apprehension, give a different sort of perception, and it is clear that Oman considers that it is, in some senses at least, superior. It is not limited by theories, it is rather the perception of the poet or the child.

He speaks of comprehension and explanation as blunting the

immediacy of perception, and cutting the perceiver off from his environment. The poet and child are not so cut off. In them we find apprehension in a general field of awareness. Thus they are in the real world of real experience; the thinker is in a less real world of explanation. He illustrates this point at considerable length from Shakespeare, Wordsworth, and his own experience as a child. His point is that the poet or child is the supreme seer for whom "... the context of perception is unity of feeling, touching a unity of the world on one side and a unity of the mind on the other, with an absolute sense of value, at least akin to what we have called the 'undifferentiate holy'." (ibid p 139). It is this relatively unsophisticated perceiving, pursued with sensitivity and sincerity, which leads to apprehension of the Supernatural realm.

He follows this with a discussion on the entire theory of knowledge in which he compares and contrasts Kant and Hegel. For our present purpose it is sufficient merely to note his conclusion, that knowledge can only be real knowledge for the individual insofar as it has a meaning for him (Kant); and that this meaning can only be 'right meaning' insofar as it is the 'real' meaning of a reality external to the knowing individual (Hegel).

We now have the existence of the Supernatural realm posited by experience and known by apprehension. The question now arises of the relation between this Supernatural and man. For Oman this is, in effect, the question of grace, and much which is found in the third section of 'The Natural and the Supernatural' under the general heading 'Necessity and Freedom' is found also in 'Grace and Personality', so that we can consider it later when we concentrate more particularly on the doctrine of grace. However, there is one important step in the argument which must be mentioned here. That is the relation between the Supernatural realm and God.

Confusion arises partly because Oman wants to face in two directions at once, or rather to use two languages and take part in two conversations. As a liberal, profoundly influenced by the appeal for intellectual openness and free use of reason, he writes as a philosopher of religion. In the context of this conversation he

argues for the existence of the Supernatural as a realm, one in which good and sincere men may and should move. However he is also a Christian and a minister. In the context of this conversation he is concerned to have dealings with God as a person, and further as a loving Father. No doubt this conception of God would have been in his mind throughout '<u>The Natural and the Supernatural</u>'. After all, divine Fatherliness had been a constant theme in his earlier works. What is not at all clear is how he brings these two ideas, or the language of these two conversations, together.

The fact is that in the third section of the book the phrase 'The Deity' is introduced, almost, it seems, as a synonym for 'The Supernatural', and that at the end of that section he speaks of 'God' arguing that God must be seen as a person. There are two important passages where this movement of thought seems to take place. In the first he is speaking of the need to assert a just order of the universe if one sees the Supernatural in terms of the supremacy of the moral order. He agrees with Kant that the question of the moral order of the universe is the question of God. But if, with Kant, one asserts justice as in some sense part of reality, there is a danger that God will become merely the administrator of laws and, like a human judge, will Himself be bound by them. Oman criticises this as too impersonal. "Laws are laws as they are impersonal, and a judge administers them as he is an incarnation of them in an individual and not a person. The idea of God as a person may be inadequate at best, ... But the least adequate form of it is that he is one individual, standing over against each of us as other individuals;..." (<u>ibid</u> p 335). In other words God must be a person, but more personal than a judge. There is also a distinction here between a person and an individual.

The other important passage deals with the possibility of sin and forgiveness. Sin, he argues here, is not merely a transgression of a law, but is insincerity in our dealings with the 'higher environment'. It is thus a personal matter. This is followed, though the connection is not made explicit, by the passage, "One other experience, if it be real, would enable us with still greater fullness and concreteness of meaning to speak of God as a person. This is forgiveness. In all higher religions the question which has given both poignancy and

tenderness to the idea of God, is whether to the sinner there is restoration and peace." (ibid p 342).

Now in all this Oman moves from speaking of the Supernatural as a realm which is responsive to persons, to speaking of a God who is not just an individual, one who is there, standing over against man, but is one with whom intimate personal relations are possible. We know from other works that his key analogy is that of Fatherhood. The question is, does he merely equate God and the Supernatural realm? From 'The Natural and the Supernatural' taken alone it would be possible to argue that he does. Healey, however, suggests that 'Supernatural' and 'God' are not synonymous. The Supernatural is rather a realm or order of reality which is personal in quality but not a person. God is a person who has dealings with men in the Supernatural realm. But the Supernatural is God's realm. "The distinction having been made, one must go on to add immediately that God and the Supernatural cannot be separated any more than say a king and his kingly rule or a father and his active fatherliness." (op cit p 111).

Confusion on this point runs throughout Oman's work. It is part of the criticism made above that he gives insufficient weight to the Divine initiative. Perhaps such confusion must always be attached to a theology which begins from man on his religious side rather than from a more positive stress on revelation. It appears in a number of modern theologians who appear to have been influenced by Oman, or who take a similar line, and we must take up this criticism later.

The survey of the basic world view presented in 'The Natural and the Supernatural' can conclude with some comments on the classification of religions in the fourth section of the book. This leads naturally to his ideas of grace. For Oman the whole point of religion is the attempt to establish a proper relationship between the Natural and the Supernatural. This is true to some extent of even the most primitive religion. Hence he argues that they cannot be classified by rational or moral criteria but rather by their ideas of redemption. 'Redemption' here is rather an odd word since it normally carries the idea of being redeemed from something, hence we might think he expected religion to redeem man from the natural to the supernatural. But,

as we have seen, that is not his idea of the relation between the two. What he means is the establishing of a relationship, hence he writes, "... all religions are religions of redemption. And what distinguishes most of all is the kind of redemption they offer, which is, in other words, their conception of the relation of the Natural and the Supernatural." (The Natural and the Supernatural p 363). A better word would be 'reconciliation', understood as the establishing of such a relationship between the two as to enable man to live in the Natural in such a way as to discover the Supernatural. Different religions, or religious attitudes, offer different approaches. "When the Supernatural is submerged in the Natural, we have idolatry; when the Natural is submerged in the Supernatural, we have pantheism; when they are set sharply apart, we have deism; when they are related by some kind of moral victory, we have at least some kind of theism." (ibid p 366).

On this basis he distinguishes five types of religion. Animism finds the abiding or eternal in a vague potency in the natural. This group includes the primitive religions. Polytheisms manage the natural by assuming various supernatural forces in some way akin to man. Pantheisms proceed on different ideas of unity. He distinguishes two broad types. Cosmic Pantheism accepts the wholeness of the Natural as being the Supernatural. Acosmic Pantheism sees the natural as illusory and seeks to be lost in the Supernatural. Of such, he thinks, are, in the last analysis, all types of mysticism. Dualisms divide the Natural into the sacred and the secular, and the Supernatural into forces of good and evil. This leads to legalism either of a ceremonial or an ethical type. Finally Prophetic Monotheism finds reconciliation to the Natural by faith in One Personal Supernatural who gives it meaning. This category includes Judaism, on its prophetic side, and Christianity.

Crossing this classification he speaks of two major contrasting trends found at various stages of religious development. One tends to pantheism; it is found in primitive and mystical religions and sees the Natural as illusory, veiling God. For this trend religion is redemption from the Natural. The other is found in the Polytheistic, Legal and Prophetic types of religion. For this trend

redemption is found in and through the Natural, it has a more hopeful and optimistic approach to the Natural world.

It is not necessary for our purpose to examine Oman's full treatment of religions, but merely to note that Christianity is seen as a Prophetic, ethical, and essentially non-mystical religion. On this he waxes eloquent. While all religions have some concern for reconciling the Natural, and with it man, with the Supernatural, and so all are in some sense redemptive, Prophetic religion is more comprehensive and more profound in its treatment of the whole of the Natural order and the lot of man. Only the Prophets "... in face of the same calamities as struck others with abject terror, show a reconciliation to God in all His appointments in the Natural ... which made reconciliation all religion and not merely part of it. As this left outside of God's rule no sphere which does not manifest His wisdom, righteousness and love, it is also alone true monotheism, which is not a mere affirming that God is one, but is the assurance that the world is all God's by reconciliation to His meaning in it and His purpose beyond it." (ibid p 446f). This prophetic religion is found in its purity only in the Hebrew prophets and in Jesus. It is necessarily the experience of the individual. When an attempt is made to make it the religion of a group - nation or church - it is liable to lapse into some form of legalism.

Such reconciliation is not a theory only but a positive attitude towards life in the Natural as manifesting the Supernatural worth and purpose. The achievement of the Hebrew prophets was not simply to arrive at the conclusion 'God is One'. "They were monotheists in the only effective sense of being enabled to face the darkest ills of life in the assurance that God's meaning is in all and his purpose over all. What determines their faith is not a theory of the Supernatural, but an attitude towards the Natural, as a sphere in which a victory of deeper meaning than the visible and of more abiding purpose than the fleeting can be won." (ibid p 448). However, they saw also that if man used the Natural to further his own pride and ambition this would lead to calamity for him. Yet even that calamity was part of God's purpose and ultimately for man's good. As God's whole purpose for man is for his highest good, diversion from that purpose

is evil, and the calamity which follows it could, ideally, bring man back to the purpose.

The development of the prophetic movement sees a growing stress on individual insight and personal religion. This was not the aggrandisement of personal opinion. Neither was it that warmth of personal devotion which in some strains of piety can lead to a selfish enjoyment of the individual's own relationship with God. The two words most characteristic of Oman's treatment are 'freedom' and 'insight'. He opposes these to all religions of reliance on external authority or outward conformity on the one hand, or of selfish satisfaction on the other. Thus he finds the peak of the movement, in the Old Testament, in Jeremiah's conception of a rule of God which the believer knows by his own insight. "This kingdom of freedom which, by personal insight and consecration, emancipates from all slavery to custom and lust of pleasure or gain, and so from all final trust in material safeguards, political or ecclesiastical, we can see, looking back from Jeremiah, was the hope of all the prophets." (ibid p 454).

Yet the prophets were not foolishly optimistic about human nature and its perfectibility. They saw clearly the corruption of the human heart. This they explained as due to its being self-enclosed and thus unable to see the purpose of God. Hence they sought to open men's hearts to God, but not by force, only by appeal and persuasion.

The prophetic movement reaches its peak in Jesus. It was shown in His life as one who saw and accepted God's purpose in the world for himself, and who accepted God's valuation of others so that none were beyond his love or his purpose. It was to his own understanding of the Fatherhood of God that Jesus invited his followers. However, he did not appeal to authority, neither did he in any way seek to force men's opinions. He respected their freedom, but sought to appeal to experience and by example to call them to a greater freedom which would come by knowing themselves to be the children of God and finding his purpose in their lives. Such an appeal, and a response to it which is not disappointed but feels it has met with success, is only

possible because it put men in contact with the Supernatural as it really is and totally respects their freedom. "... with Jesus the only creed is a prayer, the only casuistry the spirit of love, the only organisation the willingness to be first in service and last in honour, the only form of worship worship in spirit and in truth. If Jesus is in any sense a final authority in religion, it is because he spoke entirely from this witness of the reality, and not by any authority apart from it." (ibid p 468). When this appeal to man's personal insight was replaced by an appeal to the Gospels as an external authority the nature of Christianity was changed.

In the last few pages of 'The Natural and the Supernatural' Oman uses ideas of grace which he had previously set out in 'Grace and Personality'. But, on his own admission, the world view of the later book had already been basic to his thinking. Thus as we turn to look more closely at what he says about grace it is important to notice again that we will not find the same sort of treatment we found in the other writers considered. We can not, therefore, put the questions outlined in the introduction to this study - at least, not in the same way. Farmer comments of 'Grace and Personality' that it "... is not only great and profound theology; it is also a great religious book, if one may make such a distinction; ..." (op cit p 134). Perhaps the distinction should not be too absolute. But it may well be that we will understand 'Grace and Personality' better, and get more light from it, if we approach it as a classic of religious and devotional thinking written from within the church - almost as a personal confession of faith and experience - rather than as a work of systematic or dogmatic theology or apologetics.

Oman saw the question of grace as the question of the entire relation between God and man. He is drawn to it both as a believer and as a philosopher. In the background of his own thinking lie the disputes between Augustine and Pelagius, and the post-Reformation controversies over predestination, election, original sin and the freedom of the will. He is dissatisfied with the normal approaches to these questions, which he considers to be too mechanistic and impersonal. His own treatment uses ideas of personality and personal

relationship as guiding themes.

He first wrote on the subject in a series of articles entitled 'Personality and Grace' in the '<u>Expositor</u>' beginning in 1911. These articles were the basis of the book '<u>Grace and Personality</u>' published in 1917. It is interesting that such a volume should have been produced by a Liberal theologian during a war which tested many people's confidence in grace, and for many others brought the end of whatever confidence they may have had in Liberal theology. As far as Oman was concerned there was no suggestion of producing 'tracts for the times', but rather of offering reflections which had stood the test of the times. More important still he felt that his method of approaching the problem stood the test in a way that the other methods - of traditional orthodoxy, rationalism, or genial liberalism - would not have done. In the preface to the first edition he wrote that the articles "... were already the outcome of many years of study and reflection: and, if I have any confidence in offering the result of renewed thought on the subject, it is that the main contention seems to have stood the test (of the war) in a way impossible, not only for a merely sentimental faith in a beneficient Deity, but also for any doctrine that starts from the Absolute, whether as the absolute process of Reason or as the absolute Divine Sovereignty." (<u>Grace and Personality</u> p vi). Thus though he does not enter into any formal argument with earlier positions there is, especially in the first section of the book, a good deal of implied criticism of them. I shall attempt to outline his argument fairly fully, making some criticisms as the argument proceeds, and conclude with some criticisms arising from those questions which are normally raised in treatments of the doctrine of grace but which do not loom large in Oman.

Traditionally discussions of grace have begun from the idea of God as omnipotent omniscient power. That being the case it has been natural to expect that God would provide infallible authorities and work his will by irresistible might. In other words we expect God to act as we would act if we were God. The idea of grace involved here Oman refers to as 'Omnipotence directed in a straight line by Omniscience". However experience, either of the unsatisfactory nature of the world, or of our own moral lives, indicates that God does not work

in that way. Reflection also leads us to question whether such means of action would be in keeping with divine fatherhood, or with any personal relations. Recent teaching had raised the question of personality, and Oman spent some time analysing the moral person and showing the difficulties involved in holding together what he took to be the traditional idea of grace, that is as irresistible force, and an understanding of moral personality.

He takes as his starting point the assertion of the independence of the moral person "... we find that the vital and distinguishing characteristic of a moral person is what philosophers have called autonomy. When that is lost, man is no longer a person, but is a mere animate creature. This independence is the singular, the unique quality of a person, and in any relations between persons where, on either side, this is ignored, the relation becomes less than personal." (ibid p 42).

He elaborates this in three assertions. First a moral person is necessarily self-determined. It is true that men often act from physical compulsion, or from unrecognised psychological motivation, but such actions cannot be considered moral. If we were not free to make decisions for ourselves we would not be conscious of ourselves. It is this freedom which is basic to our sense of responsibility to act in certain situations, and our sense of remorse if we have acted badly. Neither may we evade the responsibility by speaking of our character. Here he distinguishes character from disposition. Our disposition is in some sense 'given', but we are responsible for what we make of it, that is our character. We form our character by our choices. In fact we instinctively do not allow appeals to character to condone wrong actions, we hold people responsible for their characters.[1]

Secondly, a moral person is self-determined according to his own self-direction. The morally right decision must be inwardly accepted, not simply obeyed as a decision from outside ourselves.

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1. It will be recalled that Denney makes a similar distinction in terms of trial and fate when writing about Augustine and Pelagius. supra p 62f. cp 'Studies in Theology' p 91; 'The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation p 197ff.

We may look for guidance, or speak of educating the conscience, but in the last analysis nothing is morally binding upon us which our own conscience does not acknowledge. Further, the acceptance of any action as morally obligatory implies that it is within our power. "the only vital question regarding self-determination concerns our freedom to follow this self-direction - to do, of our own purpose, what we know, of our own insight, we ought. ... The sense of being within our duty is, at the same moment, the sense of being within our power; for what we cannot do no 'ought' can impose upon us." (ibid p 53f).

Finally, this self-determination by self-direction is possible because its sphere is our own self-consciousness. By this he means more than simply that we are conscious of ourselves. The point is that there are many events and situations which may affect us but which always remain external to us, or even unknown by us. But until we are personally conscious of them they are beyond our moral judgement. The world in which we act morally must be admitted to our self-consciousness. "... the world which is our real moral sphere is ours only as we interpret it, are interested in it, judge it, use it." (ibid p 56). For all the actions which we take, determined and directed by ourselves and within the sphere of our own self-consciousness, we are totally responsible.

If grace has to do with such personalities then the traditional idea of 'Omnipotence directed in a straight line by Omniscience' will not do, says Oman. Grace as irresistible force would overcome our personality and reduce man to the status of a thing. He would not then be a moral personality and God would not only not have dealt with him personally, but would not be able to do so.

Yet Oman sees that behind the theories of irresistible grace and ideas of predestination is a profound religious experience. His first academic work, which he did while a minister at Alnwick, had been to translate and edit Schleiermacher's 'Speeches on Religion to its cultured despisers'. He had learned from Schleiermacher, and from the Calvinist tradition of his own church, that in some sense man is completely dependent on God. Furthermore he realised that,

paradoxically moral independence and religious dependence were both characteristic of Calvinist piety at its best.

He has thus arrived at an apparent impasse. Morality demands that man should be independent so that he can decide; religion demands absolute dependence on God. Compromises do not work since they damage one side or the other. If man is buttressed by religion he does not appear to make independent moral choices, and if he is to be accepted by God for his good works he is not religiously dependent. However, experience demands that the two should not be permanently separated since, strangely, they seem to need each other. Religion ceases to be spiritual if the elements of moral personality which we have noted are removed. "Faith is not spiritual unless won by our own insight into truth, received by the consent of our own wills, and applied to the government of our own lives. And, without goodness shining in its own light, every standard by which we could judge a doctrine of God is lost, and faith becomes mere submission to arbitrary greatness." (ibid p 61). On the other hand morality left alone tends to lose the sense of 'ought', or to bring it down to what is manageable, it "... does not go much beyond decency and fair-play, and leaves out of sight the deepest of all moral requirements, which is not to act conscientiously, but to seek an ever more penetrating conscientiousness." (ibid p 63). Yet, to refer to experience again, it is a fact that in actual life there does not only not seem to be a clash between moral independence and religious dependence, but the two cohere and somehow support each other.

Of course Oman is not the first to arrive at this impasse. His approach to understanding the two apparently irreconcilable sides of the experience together is through his world view. The moral person making moral decisions is always conscious of living in a world which somehow supports or responds to those decisions, in the long run if not in the short. In 'Grace and Personality' he seems to assume this line of thought rather than argue it. The conviction 'we can because we ought' demands a certain type of world, a moral one. It is based, he argues, on a confidence essentially religious. Moral choice and action cannot be an individualistic thing, it demands a moral world. Moral choice is not a statement of preference, but a desire to follow,

to fit in with, what is somehow true of reality. In that case it is wrong to separate morality from religion since both are true about the world. "Seeing we need a moral world to act in, moral truth to walk by and a moral fellowship in which to serve, to divide moral independence from religious dependence is merely to dissect living reality in order to make explanation easy. As the living unity is thereby turned into separate dead mechanisms, the explanation is as misleading as it is facile." (ibid p 64). Clearly this is to assume the 'spiritual' world view which we have seen in 'The Natural and the Supernatural'. It also overlooks the fact that many of his contemporaries would have accepted the mechanistic description of the world which he hints at so disparagingly in order to dismiss it. Later he had to consider that view more seriously so we must digress to look at that consideration.

It occupies the third section of 'The Natural and the Supernatural' under the heading 'Necessity and Freedom'. He refers to two cosmologies, both of which seem necessary. It seems necessary to believe that man is free to act, and that action brings certain awards; and it also seems necessary to believe that the world is based on certain impersonal laws of cause and effect. In the light of these conflicting ideas he discusses the theory of evolution.

For our purposes it is not necessary to consider his arguments in detail but merely to note his conclusion, that evolution is by reaching forward to a fuller meaning. The stress here is on the idea of meaning. This is not the same as an argument from design in which, to put it crudely, God may be supposed to have created the world on the basis of a blue-print the outlines of which we can discover. It is rather the assertion that the environment of the world is such that it responds to the individual's quest for meaning and value, because it is much an environment that the value is waiting to be discovered. A purely naturalistic account of evolution demands such a view, according to Oman, though it does not admit that it makes the demand. "... nothing makes a purely naturalistic account of evolution plausible save the ease with which this environment, in which all true values, natural and supernatural, are already effectively present, is assumed, not because the theory is entitled to the

assumption, but because it cannot emancipate itself from the assumption on which all life proceeds." (The Natural and the Supernatural p 278).

The same assumption about the Supernatural as in some way undergirding and interpenetrating the Natural is involved in the assertion of spiritual freedom and advance. The only freedom worth having is the freedom for right thinking and right acting, and such freedom is "... to know a reality which so witnesses in its own right that no other witness has any right before it." (ibid p 311). Later he argues that as man adopts higher ideals the universe is seen to be reliable, and responsive to those ideals. The environment is found amenable to ideals of truth, beauty and goodness, which in turn are found to be appropriate for direction of human conduct in the world. What ought to be is seen as in some sense more real than what is, because it is in some sense 'read off' from a truer reality. "... this presupposes more than that the Supernatural is real. The problem it presents is that the Supernatural must also be the reality of the Natural." (ibid p 331). What we call spiritual advancement is progress into the apprehension and use of the Supernatural. Thus he comes back by a long and detailed philosophical discussion to the point which we have seen him make 'religiously' in 'Grace and Personality'.

If this world view is accepted, together with the idea of moral personality previously outlined, the idea of grace must be re-cast. It cannot be 'Omnipotence directed in a straight line by Omniscience', neither is its working likely to be direct at all, if by that any sort of overwhelming force or influence is intended. For Oman, Grace is the succouring and supporting of our moral independence, coupled with the indirect persuasion by which we are led to see the Supernatural in the Natural, and to meet it in all our dealings with our fellow men.

It might seem an objection to this understanding of grace that in all generations there have been 'crisis-conversions'. Men and women have been turned in an instant from darkness to light. There are stock examples - Paul, Augustine, Wesley - but hosts of less famous Christians have witnessed to the same experience.

One senses that Oman is uneasy in dealing with this experience. He is aware that such conversions occur, and is too honest to overlook them completely. Yet it seems that the spiritual 'tone' of the crisis conversion, the religious atmosphere in which such phenomena may be accepted, or even expected, is foreign to him. He inhabits a more urbane, sophisticated and scholarly cautious world. One could not imagine him, like Denney, asserting that Paul might be more truly understood in mission halls or street corner meetings than in theological lecture rooms, or seriously bringing forward the views and experiences of a lay evangelist among the fisherfolk of Aberdeen in support of a theological argument. Yet the great teachers of grace have always been at least sympathetic to this atmosphere. Oman looks at the testimony meeting from the vantage point of the lecture room. It is difficult to avoid the impression that he also assumes a certain superiority in his attitude to it, and that this assumption is based not only on ignorance of certain elements of Christian experience, but also on a defective view of sin. This is a criticism to which we shall return.

Though he notes the occurrence of crisis-conversions he will not allow either that they are as sudden as they sometimes seem, or that they are outside the moral description of grace which he has given. He uses the example of physical illness and claims that we do not suggest a cure is sudden because the result appears suddenly in the patient's leaving bed. Just as hidden recuperative powers may have been at work for some time in that case, so, in the case of spiritual changes there may have been a long period of preparation.

Alternatively he returns to the idea of 'disposition'. The implication is that certain people have dispositions which respond in this way. But, of itself, disposition is neutral in a moral sense, it is only as it is used that it becomes of moral worth. This is a variation of William James argument that the 'twice-born' Christian is merely of a different psychological type.

He is also critical of those who seem to rely on crisis-conversions in such a way that they themselves remain passive. As though, to put it simply, God is left to do the work while the man

opts out of the moral struggle. He complains that, "Persons who rely on this passive type of regeneration are often wanting in kind and patient relations to their fellows and even fall at times into utter uncharitableness." (Grace and Personality p 76). Such people can feel themselves to be objects of God's special attention while they are in fact cutting themselves off from God's action by thinking themselves above it as it comes to them in normal life. True conversion, on the other hand, is an awakening of our true relation to God and man. Hence it must involve personal insight. It is due "... not to mystical transformation of the soul, but to the hearing ear and the understanding heart perceiving a new meaning in things, which changes for us our whole world." (ibid p 79).

Doubtless the points he makes about crisis-conversions are true and helpful, but one still feels that he has not adequately come to terms with a well authenticated spiritual experience which one might expect to have a more central role in a treatment of grace. By pointing to possible explanations and aberrations he has avoided having to discuss the real thing.

For Oman then Grace is divine persuasion. Whatever may be said of supposed omissions in his work it must be acknowledged that this point he sees well and illustrates eloquently. It is, he notes, typical of God's dealings with his world not to force anything. Man uses direct methods, God has more patience. "What all life does say to us is that God does not conduct His rivers, like arrows, to the sea. The ruler and compass are only for finite mortals who labour, by taking thought, to overcome their limitations, and are not for the Infinite mind. The expedition demanded by man's small power and short day produces the canal, but nature, with a beneficient and picturesque circumambulancy, the work of a more spacious and less precipitate mind, produces the river. Why should we assume that, in all the rest of His ways, He rejoices in the river, but, in religion, can use no adequate method save the canal?" (ibid p 15)

Even more telling is his use of the analogy of fatherhood, to which he constantly returns in all parts of his work. The fatherhood

of God, as illustrated by the life of Jesus is not restricted to the religious sphere or to any particular channels. Accordingly our concept of grace should be such that we can expect to find it in all of life. The important point is the right relation to God. "Thus the daily drudgery might crown us with the dignity of faithful, self-forgetting, humble service, while our most overwhelming mystical experience might turn into spiritual pride and uncharitableness." (ibid p 86). If the relationship is wrong, "... if we measure the world by a different good and pursue ends in it God has not blessed, what we work in it is evil and what we hope from it disappoints." (ibid p 83). The right relationship depends on our freely accepting, by our own moral insight, God's will as the ultimate meaning of life. This must be something we aim at, or rather something that we are persuaded to accept as our aim, not something from which we start. However, once we accept the aim, we find God to be a loving father who, like a good human father, guides his children and gives to them, not in such a way as to override their own moral effort or to make it useless, but in such a way as to encourage and support it. Put like that, in terms of a gracious personal relationship working by persuasion rather than force, the traditional conflicts between the grace of God and the will of man may be seen to disappear.

In all this it is interesting to note that his starting point obliges Oman to accept a limitation of God. Not that God is limited in himself, but that he has accepted limitations in his dealings with men. Such limitations are implicit in personal relations between moral beings.

Oman has now, in the first third of 'Grace and Personality', said all that he has to say about what grace is, and even, in embryonic form, about its implications. The view is not developed, in the sense of anything being added to it or the meaning being refined. However, he goes on, in some of his most illuminating and, from a 'religious' point of view, most helpful writing, to speak of the manifestation of grace and the way of its working. These chapters are very uneven in quality. His method is to take a theme, a Biblical or theological term which has had some place in the history of the doctrine of grace, and show how it can be interpreted with his view of grace. The

unevenness arises partly from the fact that some chapters are more or less devotional meditations while others are theological essays, and partly from the fact that it is not always easy to see any connection between the chapters. Sometimes two or three are connected, but others seem to stand alone. Thus it is not easy to see the development of an argument. Like the river he admires he is inclined to meander.

He begins the section on the mode of the manifestation of grace with a very interesting meditation on the Beatitudes, insisting that "... they are not negative moral imperatives to be obeyed by resolution and effort, but are a religious programme of how we can have absolute moral independence in the world by discovering how utterly God is to be depended upon." (ibid p 94). The basis of them all, and the basis of the life of blessedness, is poverty of spirit seen not as stoic resignation or mere fatalism but as "... acceptance of the duty God demands and acquiescence in the discipline He appoints, not as submission to the inevitable, but as the discovery that our blessedness is in God's purpose in the world and beyond it." (ibid p 98). Once again we have the insistence on a world view accepted by our own insight.

This repetition of the position we have already discussed is repeated in treatments of Redemption and Reconciliation. Thus he writes, "This question concerns nothing less than the nature of the world. Is it a world such as Jesus conceived it, where, if we seek first the Kingdom of God and its righteousness, all the rest is secure; or is it such a world as Huxley propounded, where morality is a nightmare accident, to be maintained, at most for a little space and for a little time, against a natural order which can be effectively used only by the cunning of the ape and the ferocity of the tiger?" (ibid p 115). And the enmity with God which precedes reconciliation is seen as enmity with reality, "... reality is not one thing and God another; and if we are at enmity with God, we are at enmity with reality, past and present, as well as to come. To be at enmity against God is neither more nor less than to be in bitter hostility to reality, with the sense that it is all against us." (ibid p 123). Against this background reconciliation is acceptance of life with its

duties and disappointments as the discipline which God appoints. Such acceptance is not mere fatalistic resignation, but present active fellowship with God. "This is the true belief in Providence, ... the last and highest victory of a faith which has won a vision of a true and abiding good, which is not of the world, even while all things in the world become a new creation to forward it." (ibid p 127).

Faith, for Oman is our recognition of this personal nature of the world, or rather of God's personal dealings with us through the world. It is not something we can force from ourselves, or work up within ourselves. Basically it is not a subjective emotion. It is rather a response to the love of God expressed in the world. "Faith affirms that the actual order of the world, upon which all our blessedness utterly depends, is of the nature of the wise and holy goodness we name love. Being an assertion about reality, about what is the ultimate word of power, as well as the ultimate word of fellowship, it must either be true or the vastest and most misleading delusion." (ibid p 237). Thus faith is a response to an initiative of God. It can even be called a gift of God since he gives it, "... by the whole witness of life, interpreted by the whole of revelation, which, for the Christian, means, in particular, life as interpreted by Jesus Christ." (ibid p 140). The sin of unbelief is to be insincere in our approach to life and thus to 'ward off' this insight.

The last quotation introduces ideas of revelation and the person of Jesus. It comes as something of a surprise to realise that, apart from references to the end of belief in an infallible scripture and some illustrations from the teaching of Jesus, we are nearly half way through the book before these questions arise. This is perhaps best taken as confirmation of the suggestion that Oman is writing within the church and, perhaps unconsciously, assuming a good deal in his readers. It is also worth noting that he had written on the question of revelation in 'Vision and Authority' (1902). The chapters of 'Grace and Personality' which deal with Christ, Revelation and the Church seem to be largely adapted from the earlier book.

It is, as we have seen, basic to Oman's position that God reveals

himself in all history and through all life to those who are sincere. Yet as personal revelation takes place most naturally through persons by whose experience, and their understanding of it, true understanding of God's grace as personal relationship is given. "... we see that the living experience of those who, by special faithfulness in high endeavour and large conflict, have understood God's purpose in the world, may be a far Diviner vehicle than a mere animated pen, and that, as it interprets its own experience direct to ours, it has a security which no evidence for past infallibility can ever enjoy." (ibid p 146). This view clearly leaves out any idea of propositional revelation, or, for that matter, any idea of revelation as giving information. Revelation is the showing forth or commending to our personal insight, of God's gracious dealing with us in all things. As such it is always available. "What we understand as, in a special sense, revelation is not some extra manifestation to make up for God's defects, but a dealing with the alienation which can see no gracious relation of God to us in any manifestation." (ibid p 164).

Man's understanding of God's gracious relationship has come slowly. It is open to any man who is sincere, but there has been a special succession of men whose insight has been deeper, or surer, than that of others, and, in this as other fields, progress is made by building on the work of those who have gone before. The special succession are the prophets whose words, directed to men's hearts rather than their intellects, have attempted to bring, and have brought, others to this personal insight. In the Hebrew-Christian tradition these men have established one line of advance that is supreme. It is in this sense, apparently, that Oman understands historical revelation, though he prefers to speak of historical reconciliation. The word of the prophet not only inspires, but reconciles us to God's purpose in the world.

It is in the succession of prophets that he places Jesus. In Jesus above all others we find an appeal to man's insight and a refusal to rely on external authority. He takes up the work of the prophets, but does not externalise them as authorities. "His appeal was never in the last resort to Scripture but to the hearts of living men, and the true use of the Scripture was only to aid Him in this

final appeal." (Vision and Authority p 103). However, Jesus was more than a prophet in that he exemplified his teaching in his life. "Alone among men His practice was adequate to His precept, so that no distinction need be drawn between what He said and what He did, so that His teaching only expounds His life and His life only enforces His teaching." (ibid p 104).

Clearly this is an important point in Oman's theology. What does he teach about the person and work of Christ? Unfortunately it is difficult to discover how, apart from in degree, Jesus differs from the prophets. But this is not to say that Oman did not intend there to be a difference. There is a poetic ring about his descriptions of Jesus' teaching and life, and we are told that, "To His followers He seemed able to lift up man to heaven, because He has brought down God to earth; to be the way to the Father, because His truth was the fulness of the Father's purpose and His life the source of every life that fulfils it." (ibid p 105). There are many eloquent passages such as this in Oman, but it is not clear whether, or in what sense, he believes that the first followers of Jesus were right in believing what they did about him. With his background we might expect Oman to suggest that the twentieth century cannot believe in the same way, and that some re-interpretation is necessary. But he never makes his position really clear.

It seems that Jesus does something which no other could do. Sometimes it appears that this is no more than to give a demonstration of a fully reconciled life. The consummation of grace as a revelation of a personal relationship would naturally be fellowship with God, which, at its fullest or most perfect, we do not reach. Thus, "To be of significance for this fellowship, Christ must manifest our perfect relation to the Father of our spirits by blessedness in the trials, injustices and conflicts of life, so as to manifest them all as of God, and show us how, amid the actual conditions of our life, intellectual as well as physical, we remain in the Kingdom of God, which is perfect blessedness in perfect righteousness." (Grace and Personality p 152). That is, God meets us in One who fully lives our life, and suffers all that we suffer.

This appears to be a purely exemplary view of Christ and his work. But later, speaking of the Communion of Saints, Oman argues that it is a wrong understanding of membership of that communion to think of it as imitating Christ's example. Imitation is too external. If we imitate we are not acting from our own insight. "No imitative life is inspired, and no inspired life is imitative: and the mere imitation of Christ is so far from being an exception that it is beset by special limitations." (ibid p 259). There are too, differences between Jesus' situation and ours and his vocation and ours. Thus imitation is impracticable and theologically wrong. We have not to ask 'What would Jesus do?' on the big occasions of life, but rather to have the mind of Christ on matters so small that we would not think of asking that question. "Finally, this external use of Christ's example does not help us to overcome our worst moral failure. The supreme moral defect is not the lack of a good conscience, but the limitation of our insight, especially into the claims of our own vocation, which makes it so extremely easy to have a good conscience." (ibid p 260).

So Christ does more than demonstrate, somehow he overcomes the limitations which prevent our proper insight. This seems to indicate some action on his part from which we benefit. But this raises the spectre that God may override man's freedom, that man may be forced by omnipotence rather than persuaded to see the truth by his own insight. Oman was haunted by this dilemma from the first, "... how difficult must it be for Omnipotence to aid man without overwhelming him. ... To aid man were easy, but to aid man so as not to destroy his freedom, but to perfect it, is a task requiring all the manifold wisdom of God. ... for the greater the preponderance of the will that aids, the more destructive it must be for the will that is aided." (Vision and Authority p 115). The result is that, though he seems to want to speak of an action which is more than revelation, he never really seems to get beyond revelation. Thus he speaks of Christ as the ultimate revelation "... not in the sense of being a substitute for our own insight or of exhausting the whole meaning of experience, but as the inspiration of our insight and the pioneer of our experience." (Grace and Personality p 166). There follows a criticism of the idea of propositional revelation and a body of infallible revealed

truth. Thus we find that the discussion has moved from what would normally be called the idea of redemption to what would normally be called the idea of revelation. The fact that what Oman has to say on the second point is more generally acceptable, and that he says it eloquently, distracts from the fact that a shift has been made, and also from the fact that he has still not advanced from the idea of the work of Christ as revelation to seeing it as an action. This is confirmed later when the cross is seen as the manifestation of the love of God as the ultimate reality of the world and characteristic of his family. In the cross, says Oman, "... we see the gracious relation of our Father towards us, because there, as nowhere else, is the utter service of our brethren, unconditioned by our merit, shown to be the essential spirit of His family. The true meaning and power of the Cross we discover only as we have this spirit, ..." (ibid p 215f).

The substitutionary view has been helpful to many, he suggests, only because something of the truer view has broken through. What it has kept is the idea that in the cross God shares our sorrows as a father enters in to the lot of his children. "The Father must say by His whole bearing towards us, My son, let us share the sorrow and live down the shame together. And that is the meaning of the Cross. It works peace, not as an isolated event in the history of the world, but because it is the supreme manifestation of a redeeming love which works every day and in every event of every day." (ibid p 217). But there is no co-ercion. The son who wants to go away, or who does not want to allow this sharing of his sorrow and shame, is allowed to go his own way until he comes to himself. To come to himself is to realise what has always been potentially true.

Healey, having spoken of the recognition of God's personal relationship to us, and his trustworthiness as we meet him in the normal events of every day, speaks of this as a 'work-a-day' faith. To the problem of how Jesus is related to this, Healey's answer is, "To believe in Jesus Christ is to make discovery for ourselves that he is the supreme helper of our work-a-day faith in God." (op cit p 51). He offers no criticism of this interpretation of Christ. It seems to me that he has correctly interpreted Oman's position, but also

that he has shown the almost banal weakness of it. Can it really be that 'Supreme helper of our work-a-day faith in the God behind the natural world' is really what Christians have meant by their faith in Christ and long discussions on atonement? Oman argues that to reach the personal insight which he refers to as reconciliation it is not necessary to hold any particular views about the person of Christ. Indeed he suggests that when faith in Christ, in the sense of believing things about him, is introduced as an addition to faith in God a change has taken place in the original Gospel. The Christian is then conceived not as one who has found the Father and his reconciliation in Christ, but as one who holds certain opinions. Not only is this not what reconciliation is about but it evades the demand to see the Father by personal insight. It can be made more impersonal by a doctrine of the Holy Spirit as impersonal power, or by a doctrine of the sacraments as injections of grace.

Thus, though Oman seemed to want to speak of a positive action in Christ it is not clear that he has done so. We noted earlier that he criticised Rashdall for an aversion to the 'half lights' and the 'dim vistas of man's spiritual horizon'. Yet, at the end of the day, he does not himself seem to have produced anything more than an Abelardian view of atonement. It is a richer representation than Rashdall's, and certainly Oman is willing to go into the 'half lights'. He writes with great sympathy and understanding of personal religion. His criticisms of putting theories in place of personal insight, or of relying on impersonal doctrines of the Spirit or of sacraments, are valid. But he has only pointed to possible dangers. It does not follow that every view of the work of the Spirit or of sacraments is open to his criticism. And he has really slipped around the question of whether some more definite understanding of Christ's person and more objective view of his work is not necessary.

In making this digression on the person and work of Christ we have covered a lot of ground which comes later in Oman's own treatment. The last section of 'Grace and Personality', entitled 'The Way of its Working,' deals with themes which have usually been typical of more 'orthodox' views. Thus his work here is defensive, though the defence often involves implied attacks on other positions.

God's grace, his personal succour of moral personality, is available to those who will take it. Yet is is not forced upon any, just as a wise father does not force even the best gifts on his children. In the same way, just as children may set their wills against the wills of their parents, it is open to man to contradict and oppose God. The man who does so oppose God is self-deluded. This is the hypocrisy that, for Oman, is the essence of sin. It is a refusal to accept God's proffered grace. Indeed it can go further and take credit for gifts or privileges which God has given. Oman's typical description of this state is dishonesty or insincerity, since it is a refusal to see things as they really are.

Against this he places penitence. Seen in this way penitence is not simply a first step in the Christian life but a constant attitude of moral sincerity. It is not a subjective feeling which can be worked up, or a mood of intense self-deprecation, but rather a true estimate of ourselves. "Not carefully manufactured self-depreciation, but sincerity with ourselves in the light of reality, is the condition of true penitence. ... To repent, therefore, is nothing else than to see ourselves as we are in the real moral world, apart from the hypocrisy which refracts our vision ... Without such repentance faith cannot give blessedness in face of all reality, seeing that moral reality, which is the most important of all kinds of reality, is both perverted and evaded." (ibid pp 195, 199). Such repentance is not a pre-requisite of faith, it is in fact not possible apart from the realisation of a gracious personal relationship with God. Hence repentance and faith must go together. Yet it does not seem natural to man to take this attitude, where then does repentance arise? Here Oman introduces the revelation in Christ which we have already discussed. It is in the presence of Christ that we see our full responsibility and glimpse our full possibility. "Nothing in history is more certain and nothing in experience more impressive than His influence in enabling men to estimate themselves with true humility, not by making them resolve to be penitent and abased, but by setting before them the great spiritual realities, which at once expose hypocrisies and give hope in truth." (ibid p 200f).

What then is man's position in face of such realities? At first

sight it does not seem hopeful. Paradoxically the nearer a man comes to utter moral sincerity the more is he likely to revert to hypocrisy to avoid really facing up to his moral failure. Thus he is caught in a vicious circle. Sin is hypocrisy, but any chink in the armour of man's hypocrisy, any 'moment' of deeper insight, not only leads to a greater awareness of hypocrisy but provokes more. The only alternative would appear to be black despair.

On legal terms there is no escape from this situation. It is a legal fiction either to assume that we can have present justification before God on the basis of future merit, or that the merit of another can in some way be transferred to our account. Such ideas, says Oman, are mere moral juggling. Pardon must come by a means which avoids such juggling and which enables us to see ourselves as we really are, including the imputing to ourselves of our own moral failures. The solution is that pardon comes through the indirect means of personal relations, as in a family. Grace is wholly concerned with moral goodness, but it does not depend on how good we are. "Grace sets right our legal relation to God, but only by making it cease to be legal. It may not ignore any part of the moral situation, but its essential quality is shown in not treating it legally." (ibid p 210f). This is the form which forgiveness takes in a family or between friends. Offences are not condoned or overlooked, but relationships are restored in spite of them.

This is Oman's version of justification by faith. Faith is a discernment of God's mind, the insight into the nature of things which sees God's gracious attitude to all his children. It is not acceptance of creeds, a germ of grace as power which can be expected to germinate into action later, or an effort on man's part. It is rather the acceptance of the witness of reality to itself. "We have forgiveness and all its fruits because by faith we enter the world of a gracious God, out of which the old hard legal requirements, with the old hard boundaries of our personality and the old self-regarding claim of rights, have disappeared, a world which is the household of our Father where order and power and ultimate reality are of love and not of law." (ibid p 213). Though in a logical sense repentance precedes faith, it is only when this relationship of trust is enjoyed that

penitence is possible. Paul asks for repentance first when speaking to outsiders, within the community he speaks of justification by faith.

However when sin is pardoned the consequences of sin remain to be faced. Oman makes no attempt to avoid this. He has already argued that justification is not the condoning of sin, it is to be expected therefore that the sinner should bear the consequences of sin. God does not remove that, neither must men attempt to evade it. Again the appeal is to an indirect working of grace. "Grace deals with all the consequences of sin, in ourselves and in the world, in the present and in the future, but only by first enabling us to accept them". (ibid p 225). We have noted before that Oman admits the possibility of men trying to work against God, against the spiritual reality of the world. Such a course brings calamity because there is a clash with God's purpose. But a way of reconciliation is open by accepting the consequences of sin as God's fatherly discipline, his treatment of sons. Further, since the relationship is a family one, we must also accept, and help to bear, the consequences of the sin of others.

By accepting the whole of life in this way it all becomes sacramental, pointing to God's will. Our highest good, then, is to seek and to know, by our own insight, the will of God as it meets us through all life. This is not with a self-centred or negative view of establishing any legalistic claim against Him. Once the right relationship with God is found and accepted we have no need to worry about our own status or moral progress. Rather we seek the will of God as children, ideally, seek the will of their father, knowing that it is for our good. Thus it is possible to speak both of a righteousness we achieve, and of a righteousness which God gives, "... because we are dealing with a righteousness which every duty God requires and every discipline He appoints are designed to forward, so that our whole life, ... is one, infinitely varied, uninterrupted means of grace." (ibid p 240).

Oman's basic idea of grace as persuasion must affect his treatment of what are usually called 'means of grace'. They do not have value in themselves but only as helping towards a deeper personal insight and right discernment of reality. Thus instead of asking, 'how are the benefits of Christ conveyed to men and women of later ages?', one must ask, from Oman's point of view, 'what are the means by which men are persuaded or assured of the gracious fatherly concern of God for them?'.

For Oman the chief means of grace was the Church as the Communion of Saints. In spite of his constant insistence on the need for individual discernment he was far from being an individualist in the normally accepted sense of the word. To recognise God as father was to enter a family, and that meant both to benefit from and to contribute to other members of the family. This would mean at least paying some attention to those who have passed this way before, and who have grasped, or glimpsed, something of spiritual reality. In his first major work he expressed this point. "We must all build on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, on the foundation of those who have observed the Divine call and recognised the Divine teaching. To be faithful to our own spiritual insight, it must be our constant endeavour to be faithful to our spiritual ancestry." (Vision and Authority p 90). And in his last work he speaks of the value of forms, or a certain formality, for the right development of the spiritual life. "... so long as we are in the body, we cannot be independent of forms and organisations and ceremonies, and customs in respect of them. Even our Lord went to the synagogue on the Sabbath as His custom was. ... unfortunately customs and institutions by themselves are apt to fail just when most needed, yet, if not by themselves but sought for purposes beyond themselves, they may be our required succour: and honesty with our limitations should compel us to admit the need." (Honest Religion p 170f). Nevertheless, he can be very critical of certain aspects of the church, or churches, when he goes on to consider their function.

Our idea of the church, he argues, arises from our conception of grace. But, strangely, very different types of church can be based on practically identical ideas of grace. Thus he thinks it

is possible to criticise both extreme Catholicism and extreme Evangelicalism at the same time, as both see grace as omnipotent power. For this reason both fail in what he considers to be the main function of the church, that is to encourage men towards independent personal insight into the meaning of God's grace and experience of his personal concern.

He gives four points shared by these two wings of the church which he considers to be marks of a false church. Or, at least, marks of a church which has a false doctrine of grace. First, they both limit membership by imposing conditions from within the church - either acceptance of a certain tradition or submission to a certain type of experience. That is to limit the church to those to whom, or upon whom, God may be supposed to have acted, rather than making the only limit the insight of the outsider. Secondly, both are indifferent to the moral independence of members. They both try "... to persuade by impression, rather than to rest all their hopes on impressing by persuasion." (Grace and Personality p 172). This, incidentally, is a favourite contrast of Oman's. The impression is made either by ritualism or revivalism. Thirdly, since neither allows anything to man's decision they are unable to account for a divided church or an unconverted world respectively. Finally, both tend to take men out of the world rather than helping them to find God in the world. Apart from the peculiar experiences which they offer as reception of arbitrary grace, both make the rest of experience irrelevant to piety.

Against these he sets four marks of a church which sees grace as the relation of a personal God to independent moral personalities. First, such a fellowship has no limitation on membership. It includes all those who know their dependence on a gracious God and work it out through their relations to their fellows. He assumes that such people will gather together. Secondly, there is no limit to the means of grace. Everything which helps man to see and interpret God's gracious personal relation can be accepted as a means of grace. Thus the means of grace could, in theory, be as wide as a man's experience of the world. Thirdly, following the last point, there can be no division between sacred and secular. Finally, the true church is

related to the rule of God not by outward tradition and rites, as Catholicism, or by inner feeling, as Evangelicalism, but by moral relationship which accepts man's independence but finds blessedness, in the way we have seen, in reconciliation and dependence. Not that we are free, but that we are being freed.

Because we cannot claim perfection, and because it is natural that we should work through organisations, we should not be surprised to find different churches. However this should not be a cause for great concern. "If the Church is first of all the order of freedom, it is exposed to the hazards of division as no other order; and, as Christianity was itself a schism from Judaism, there must be occasions when, with all charity, loyalty to the order for which the Church stands may both justify and require separation." (Honest Religion p 173). Such divisions, he seems to imply, may simply be a reflection of psychological types, but they impose upon all Christians a test of charity. Whilst outward union is certainly desirable, it is more important that Christians should shew sympathy and understanding for the insight and independence of others.

With such views it is not surprising that he opposes any view of the church as a mystical body. He has been severely criticised for his attitude to mysticism, hence it will be as well to note carefully what he meant by it. In 'Grace and Personality' he wrote, "Mysticism is here used ... of impersonal absorption in the Divine and not in the sense of the mysterious depths of life which are inseparable from everything truly personal." (op cit p 263). Later, when he knew that he had been criticised, he tried in 'The Natural and The Supernatural', to make it clear that in opposing mysticism he did not wish to rule out any deep religious experience.[1] The mysticism he opposed undervalued the Natural which, we have seen, Oman valued highly. "The essential marks of this mysticism are, first, its attitude to the Natural, as in no form a manifestation of the Supernatural, ... and second, its attitude towards the empirical

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1. It is interesting that in the third edition of Grace and Personality (1925) he re-arranged and extended the chapter on 'The Communion of Saints', presumably to make his position clearer. cf Third edition p 254-268, and Fontana edition p 210-218. Strangely the Fontana edition is a reprint of the Second edition of 1919.

personality as the source of the unreal." (op cit p 411). His language is often complicated and confusing so that perhaps he has no cause for complaint when he is misunderstood. Nevertheless, Healey is probably correct in suggesting that, on this point, his critics have probably not paid enough attention to Oman's careful qualifications.[1]

When used of the church he regards the idea of the mystical body as a survival of tribal ideas. It thus lacks the ethical note. The mystical idea, he suggests, sees Jesus as the One who conquered in our place. Salvation is attached to his person rather than his teaching and example, and his person becomes the vehicle of mysterious forces which do not work ethically. In contrast to such ideas "The essence of the gospel appeal is humble, patient, suffering love, among us as one that serveth and not as one that sitteth at meat: and with such as appeal a mystical communication of spiritual force is in no way concerned ..." (Grace and Personality p 265). Rather the point is to inspire in us a deeper devotion to the ideals that, accepting them by our own insight, we may attain our own moral victory.

His view of sacraments will have become tolerably plain by now. Insofar as they were interpreted as vehicles of grace as 'Omnipotence directed in a straight line by Omniscience' they did not, indeed could not, serve the conception of grace as gracious personal relationship. If they were aids to this, as he considered, correct view of grace then he welcomed them. However he did not like to limit the means of grace. As we have seen, he considered that, rightly understood, all life was sacramental.

Yet he realised that there were certain special, or more limited, means of grace. He never denied them. In fact he insisted that they should not be denied. But one senses an almost grudging recognition of them. When he mentions them it is usually to draw attention to the dangers inherent in a false understanding of them. "Prayer, Word and Sacrament are still the means of grace, yet only as they are means of manifesting the truth to every man's conscience,

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1. cf Healey op cit p 168 n8.

and not merely as they are devices or vehicles or impressive doings. Except as means of persuading they cannot help to manifest God's gracious personal relation to His children, for as devices to wring blessings out of God or as vehicles to convey something into man, however individual they may be, they would not, in any strict sense, be personal." (ibid p 176). And later, "They are special means only for enlightening us regarding the true means of grace, which is life, and for enabling us to make a diviner use of life in humbler service. The public use of such means of interpreting and rightly using life, above all, may not be neglected, because no one can understand God's meaning in life in isolation, but only in the fellowship of the saints: yet no use of them is in itself religion, however vitally necessary for religion their right use may be." (ibid p 241). On a slightly more positive note he stressed that the sacraments use materials of every day life and thus shew all life as in some way manifesting God. Thus, "They presuppose that there is more in nature than an appeal to the senses, and more in every gift of good than to eat of the loaves and be filled, ..." (ibid p 177).

If, as I have suggested, this is all somewhat grudgingly admitted, we should note again that he did value the sacraments. On the subject of Christian unity, he wrote in his last book, "Yet the best means of all for unity of fellowship is not available. Of all the ways of showing how the love of the Father in the life without and the Fellowship of the Spirit within is one in the grace of Christ the greatest is the sacrament in which the symbols used sanctify the whole material life and make it transparently radiant with the spiritual." (Honest Religion p 176). While his understanding of other people's sacramental theology might have been lacking, particularly that of the more catholic wing of the church, it would not be true to say that he had no theology of the sacraments at all.

Finally we turn to his attitude to the Bible. Once more most of what needs to be said has been covered in passing. The idea of propositional revelation, or an infallible verbal authority in scripture, he saw as well past. The Bible was for him the record of the Prophetic tradition in religion leading to its climax in Jesus. In it we see God's personal giving and man's receiving, all in an

evolutionary framework. For ourselves the Bible is a means of grace in that it prompts or inspires in us the personal insight which we see in the prophets.

There is a peculiarly 'dated' air about Oman's treatment of the Bible. Even in 1939 he shows no awareness of the so-called Biblical revival associated with Barth, or of the work in this country of Sir Edwyn Hoskyns. The idea of revelatory events does not occur. His chief concern is with the critical approach to scripture which both excited and disturbed the Liberalism of his youth. In this issue he is with the critics in principle, though he thinks they are sometimes too enthusiastic and too radical. Yet even when he writes of these topics one feels that his heart is not in it. For him the great point is always man's independent personal insight, and scripture's value is only as an aid to this. Such he believes was the attitude of the Apostle Paul to the Old Testament. Of him he writes, "... the question, often asked today, of what is valid in Scripture if so much is called in question, has from him the answer that all of it is profitable for him who discerns truth because he loves God with all his mind, who knows right because he loves God with all his strength, and who gives a due value to others because he loves God with all his heart." (ibid p 87). Thus the Bible is seen far more as an inspiring book than as an inspired one. It is not seen as a record of the mighty acts of God, much less as in some sense an authoritative interpretation of them which somehow conveys their grace. The last quotation owes far more to Oman's Liberal theological background than to the apostle Paul.

During this account of Oman's thought a number of criticisms have been mentioned or implied. It should now be possible to draw them together.

As frequently noted there is no denying the great profundity of Oman's thought on a religious level. Especially is this true of 'Grace and Personality'. As a Christian, writing from within the church, and considering from a position of faith the mysteries of

divine providence, he has a great deal that is profitable to say. Thus he is very helpful in his criticism of 'straight line' theories of grace, the idea of 'Omnipotence directed in a straight line by Omniscience'. No doubt he is right to see the dangers of such ideas becoming impersonal and mechanical.

Conversely there is much to be said for his use of the concepts of moral personality and personal relations generally, particularly for his stress on the key New Testament analogy of divine fatherhood. His use of the idea of 'persuasion', with its connotations of personal relationships, as a key concept, set against the background of a moral universe, or at least a universe responsive to moral meaning, is very helpful. There can be no doubt of the importance of men being brought to see for themselves by their own insight rather than being forced. In this way he is able to move some way towards harmonising human freedom and divine control. Following from this he has some most impressive passages on the possibility of meeting God's will, and either submitting to is or refusing it, in normal daily life. This line of thought, which owes a good deal to Kant, is at least a part of normal Christian experience. In an area where much is intuited, and where throughout Christian history language and thought have lagged behind experience, Oman has shown ways of expressing the experience. Furthermore it could be said to be in line with a Biblical view of creation.

If there is an air of uncertainty about such expressions of commendation of Oman's work, it arises from the fact that there seem to be such gaps and inadequacies in what he has said that one cannot always be sure of what he has assumed as common ground between himself and the reader. Even in '<u>The Natural and the Supernatural</u>', which, as we have seen, Oman himself saw as basic to his work, he seems to be writing from a position which he himself has come to on other grounds. It does not appear that he reached his belief in God through the sort of world view which he argues for there. A great deal, both of the language and the matter, appears much richer than his arguments alone seem to warrant, and it may be that he takes over much more from revelation than he admits. Probably such borrowing from revelation, or using what was traditional in the church,

was much more common among Liberals than they admitted, or, perhaps, realised.

More hostile criticisms of Oman can be grouped broadly under two heads, which are not mutually exclusive. First, there seem to be weaknesses in his presentation of his case and its substance. Though it may be better to speak in terms of weakness than of wrong teaching. Secondly, there sometimes seems to be a lack of understanding of other positions. He criticises positions which few, if any, theologians would wish to defend. He thus gives the impression of strengthening his own case by argument when he is not in fact doing so.

I have implied throughout that one could consider the greatest weakness in his position to be its starting point. Oman begins from a world view in which the apprehension of the supernatural is a 'given'. He then, rather too easily, makes two very important assumptions - first that this Supernatural is personal, and secondly that it can be equated with the God of the Biblical tradition. Students and admirers such as Farmer and Healey offer some defence. But it really amounts to saying that he is more Biblical than he seems and that he has assumed the Biblical data. This is probably true. However, if accepted, it indicates that his real starting point is not, as he seems to suggest, a certain world view open to all. From this it would be argued that he has a much better starting point. But, paradoxically, Oman does not want that. He wants some more common and, in his view, less arbitrary ground which can presumably be shared by the non-believer.

There seem to be two dangers involved in beginning from a world view. It could lead simply to 'religion' in a vague and general sense. Using the words of Forsyth it would be beginning from what makes us religious rather than from what makes us Christian. Forsyth also speaks of the 'lower end' of religion, "... the attenuated religion where all men are religious and susceptible to some form of the spiritual in proportion to its lack of moral demand." (<u>The Principle of Authority</u> p 161). There is always the danger in Oman's sort of approach of a vague religiosity, of offering a mildly

'spiritual' atmosphere for what is basically a man-centred ethic which owes more to Kant than to the New Testament. That this ethic is admirable in itself makes it more difficult to criticise this position, but it does not make it more Christian.

A number of modern theologians who offer apologetics beginning from the philosophy of religions rather than revelation seem to lay themselves open to this charge. An appeal is made to a 'numinous' or 'religious' experience, in Oman's case the experience of the Supernatural, which, it is argued, can be recognised by all men of sensitivity and good will. This is then described in Christian language and taken to be an experience of grace.[1] Indeed, one needs to be very careful, taking the word grace in a broad sense, about arguing that it is not an experience of grace. Yet is cannot be denied that many non-believers can recognise and describe this experience without feeling obliged to give a Christian, or even a religious, interpretation of it. More argument is needed from the Christian side, and probably more acknowledgement of how much is being assumed from revelation. Writing from an avowedly Christian position, with many overtones of New Testament and Christian language, Oman gives the impression that no other interpretation of the experience is possible.

The second danger here is that this sort of argument only appeals to a certain psychological type. If, as I have suggested, we cannot even with that type claim to be putting forward anything distinctively Christian, the situation for a Christian apologist is even worse with those who claim not to recognise the experience mentioned. To any who resolutely refuse to look beyond what they consider to be hard objective fact it is difficult to see what this approach can say. Oman would presumably have to accuse such people of 'insincerity'. He assumes that his readers will not only experience moral demand and attempt to act morally, but that they will also stop to analyse their experience and behaviour. Such people may well be expected to have some sympathy with his language and the sort of ideas that he

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1. I have in mind here such men as H.H. Farmer, John Baillie, H.D. Lewis, and John Hick. This criticism, or description of a current approach, will be taken up in the conclusion to this study.

propounds. But they need not have. Much less can he expect any sort of hearing from those many people who act empirically, though morally, without indulging in any sort of deep analysis. What is needed is some stress on divine initiative.

This sort of stress is normally found with a different understanding of revelation, speaking in terms of objective acts of revelation, and with a different interpretation of the person and work of Jesus. Something has already been said of Oman's treatment of these subjects. All that needs to be said here is that, as with Rashdall, while all that he says is true it is only part of the truth. The New Testament does not present Jesus as chiefly a teacher, or one who called upon his followers to accept a new ideal or to meet the Supernatural through the Natural. Doubtless there is some trace of both of these elements, and it would be wrong to make the distinction between his person and work on the one hand, and his teaching and example on the other, too absolutely. Yet, given that Oman suggests the distinction by his own comparison of stressing either orthodox beliefs or personally accepted ideals, it must be said that the New Testament stress is the opposite to Oman's. The New Testament indicates that Jesus called for allegiance to his person and drew attention to a radical discontinuity between even a good, religious, work-a-day faith and life and such allegiance. Certainly as far as the apostles are concerned the death of Christ has a more central place and objective importance than Oman is inclined to give it.

Even Farmer allows that Oman's doctrine of reconciliation "... makes little room for what Aulem has called the classic view of Atonement, anything corresponding to the New Testament thought of a cosmic victory over evil won by the Redeemer through His Cross and Resurrection." (op cit p 134). In fact it must be admitted that his work is very weak in Biblical exegesis. Healey, having given about one page to Oman's treatment of the three titles 'Christ', 'Lord', and 'Son', adds in a note, "Oman examines such controversial passages as Romans Chap 3, vv 21-26; Colossians Chap 1, vv 16-17; the prologue to St. John; and parts of Hebrews. There seems no need to refer to this, however, in the text." (op cit p 169 n6). This sounds very impressive. The truth is however, that Oman's treatment of

the passages concerned is scarcely longer than Healey's, and Healey has given the 'meat' of it.[1] It would, of course, be possible to present the Biblical meaning without much reference to the text. And, as I have mentioned before, it is not possible to measure the importance of a theme in a man's thought by counting the number of words or pages he devotes to it. Nevertheless, Oman's somewhat cavalier dismissal of substitution, and indeed the whole long history of debate over Jesus' person and work, suggests that he has not entered very fully into ideas which have been central in the discussion of the subject. Neither can it be said that he has demythologised or interpreted these ideas and the Biblical passages on which they rest. He has largely ignored them in order to press on with his own view of persuasive grace. This view does not need to be grounded in the cross, or indeed in the incarnation and ministry of Jesus, as the traditional view does.

Closely linked with this is the weakness of his teaching on sin. While there is no doubt that ideas of insincerity and hypocrisy, which he mentions, are part of the New Testament teaching on sin, they are not all of it. He writes "... sin is a wider conception than transgression, embracing all lack of earnestness and sincerity in seeking to know God's purpose as well as in fulfilling what we do know." (ibid p 113). Yet it is questionable whether, in the way he treats it, it does not become a lesser conception than transgression. Wider perhaps, but not particularly deep.

The New Testament, and Christian thought and experience generally, sees a good deal more than insincerity involved in sin. There are ideas of rebellion and positive culpable evil, for the discussion and treatment of which legal ideas have seemed apt. The weakness of Oman's treatment is that he does not even show how ideas of forensic atonement, even granting that they may be excessively external, ever managed even to seem to be adequate. The whole idea of judgement tends to be played down. His comment quoted above, "Grace sets right our legal relation to God, but only by making it cease to be legal. It may not ignore any part of the moral situation, but its essential quality is shown in not treating it legally." (Grace and Personality p 210f), has a limited understanding

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1. cf Honest Religion pp 97-102; 104f

of the way in which legal ideas may be applied. While the excessively external idea of adding up good and bad deeds on the basis of which an account is rendered and paid by Jesus may be too rigidly legalistic, the forensic language used in thinking about the atonement has kept the New Testament emphasis that God does right and is righteous. The nearest Oman gets to doing justice to this sort of thinking is in his insistence that the consequences of sin must be faced. There is truth in this. But it might be that some distinction could be made between consequences in the form of results, which is Oman's idea, and the conception of dealing with sin in its aspect of rebellion. The first, to a large extent, man has to bear himself. The second perhaps he could not, and the whole Gospel is that, by God's grace, he need not.

The idea of something that man can not do introduces a further aspect of sin. There is a sense of sin as bondage and corruption, the idea expressed in Romans 7:7-25. It is not enough that man knows what he ought to do, or even that he wants to do it. Oman's whole position of course is that, in this situation, man is helped in his struggle by grace as succour and support. While this is no doubt part of the idea of grace, Paul seems to think less of support than of release. This is only partly covered by Oman's idea that the Christian man's moral effort is differently motivated. It may be partly a matter of 'tone', but certainly the 'tone' of Paul is different from that of Oman. It is the sense of release from bondage as a gift, something that could not be achieved by the individual, even with help, that often lies at the heart of 'crisis' conversions. Oman's uneasiness about this aspect of the work of grace is a severe weakness in his position. While he provides some excellent material for the Christian pastor, he has nothing to offer the evangelist.

Finally we must note his apparent lack of understanding of other positions. As well as his somewhat easy dismissal of Protestant orthodoxy and mysticism, already noted, he has an unsympathetic approach to the 'catholic' wing of the church. He shows here the weakness of his strengths. His great strength was his stress on the moral personality. We noted that those who are unhappy about his criticism of mysticism need to pay attention to his careful

definitions and qualifications. Thus he writes, "The sense of touching through experience the deeper things which give experience meaning, may be called mystical, and then mysticism is just another name for religion." (ibid p 263). It was not this which he criticised but the absorption of the moral self into the divine.

Nevertheless there seem to be areas of Christian experience to which is is temperamentally hostile. As he fears stress on the experience of conversion may lose the conscious moral aspects of experience, so he reacts against the catholic approach to sacraments. Indeed, as we have seen, he puts the two wings of the church together. The fact that he could do so may indicate some superficiality in his approach to both. In pressing his own view he tended to put together all those which seemed different from it, or lacking from its point of view. He was unwilling to leave anything unexplained, or to allow that anything might need to be explained on non-moral grounds. He suspected the non-moral of being sub-personal and immoral. Thus Mozley, reviewing 'Grace and Personality' allows that when orthodox belief or mysticism approaching absorption displace man's moral response to Christ, or the Christian's service to his fellow men, then the response of the believer is on the wrong lines. But he argues "... the sense of mystical union with Christ's person does not necessarily, and has not normally, resulted in His person becoming 'a mysterious vehicle of forces' which operate overwhelmingly and omnipotently." And he adds, very discerningly, "As to orthodox belief, the Scriptures and Sacraments, it should be remembered that these do not simply exist to be understood by spiritual insight, but as means to produce it. If truth and reality belong to them at all, they belong to them in their own right and prior to their use..." (J.T.S. Vol XXI p 351f).

Mozley was a very discerning critic. Much more than most men he was able to enter sympathetically into the minds of others and see the positive value of opinions which he himself did not hold, without abandoning his own position. He had great respect for Oman. We may therefore conclude our treatment of Oman with some words which Mozley wrote elsewhere in criticism of his weakness and acknowledgement of his strength. "Dr Oman seems to me to be too

much outside the particular and characteristic field of sacramental praxis and theology which we associate with Catholicism to be first a satisfactory interpreter and then an adequate critic. There is not enough sympathetic penetration, at least at this point; and mental, and even spiritual power, richly as his book is endowed with both, do not make up for that lack. He sees negatives in the position of others which they would deny, or of which they would give a different description. The positive in his own position which he knows at first hand is of very high religious value." (Essays Catholic and Critical, 3rd Edition 1931, p 245). One might add that, strangely, Oman also seemed out of contact with the real world of Reformed theology and piety. His was a genuinely Liberal theology.

VI. OLIVER QUICK (1885-1944)

Oliver Chase Quick was a younger contemporary of Oman, but his work shows a distinct change in method and mood. In Quick the move away from an easy, optimistic, Liberalism, already apparent in the older man, is much more marked. Yet some of the chief characteristics of Liberalism, he would doubtless say the best of it, remain. Hence he is not an easy theologian to label.

He is perhaps best seen as a transitional figure. He was aware that the more philosophical or intellectual approach to Christianity through some form of idealism had lost the popularity and prestige which it had once enjoyed. That is was open to severe criticism, and that it had led to a distortion of the Christian Gospel, he well knew. Indeed, as we shall see, he is frequently critical of it himself. But he is not willing to jettison the entire method because some of its results have been bad, or because it has been wrongly used. He is also aware that a new orthodoxy is rising, the so-called Biblical Theology associated with Karl Barth and represented in England chiefly by Hoskyns. Again his approach is equivocal. His own writings contain far more straight Biblical work than we found in Oman, and there is far more orthodox insistence on the uniqueness and significance of Christ. But he finds this approach limiting. He does not seem at home in detailed exegesis of scripture, and prefers to press on to a more philosophical presentation of the meaning and outworking of Christian faith.

Thus he appears to represent something of a watershed, at least as far as British theology is concerned. Old ways were passing away, new ones were not yet established. This, as we have noted, was indicated clearly by Temple in his preface to the report of the Commission on Doctrine in the Church of England, published in 1939. In this situation Quick set himself to expound the faith to his own generation with the tools at his disposal. That he should do so with such confidence in such an intellectual climate is perhaps his chief claim to greatness. J.K. Mozley said of him, "He was not

grandly impressive after the manner of von Hugel and Forsyth, and he had not accumulated those vast stores of knowledge which we associate with such of his contemporaries as H.R. Mackintosh and N.P. Williams. But as an expounder of the essentials of Christian orthodoxy he was second to none. Orthodoxy, right thinking about God's revealing and redeeming activity in Christ, was for him both the end in which the intellect could find satisfaction and the starting-point from which it could advance to a discernment of the meaning and purpose of all that is." (Oliver Quick as a Theologian, in Theology Vol XLVIII p 36). It is possible to distinguish two chief influences on his exposition. The first is the Anglican tradition of thought and sacramental worship in which he was rooted, the second is the philosophical cast of his mind.

His roots in Anglicanism went deep, he was a devout churchman all his life and a member of the Archbishop's Commission on Doctrine. Born in a vicarage, he read classics and theology at Oxford before his ordination in 1911. There followed curacies at Beckenham and Wolverhampton; a period as vice-Principal of the Leeds Clergy School under B.K. Cunningham, which came to an end with the outbreak of war in 1914; a short period as curate to H.R.L. Sheppard at St. Martin in the fields; nearly two years as domestic chaplain to Archbishop Randall Davidson; a short time, again as assistant to Cunningham, organising spiritual refresher courses for Army Chaplains in France; and, after the war, appointment as Vicar of Kenley in Surrey. From 1920 until his death he occupied various canonries: at Newcastle (1920-23), Carlisle (1923-30), St. Paul's (1930-34); Durham (1934-39), and Christ Church, Oxford (1939-43). His time and thought were increasingly absorbed with academic theology, and the last two appointments were both Canon Professorships.

He claimed allegiance to no particular party in the church, but could perhaps best be described as a Liberal Catholic. His theology shows the typical Anglican appeal to scripture, tradition and reason, and his sense of the reality of the church's fellowship and its sacramental worship infused all his thought. The importance of this for his understanding of the work of Christ, as well as in the more obvious realm of sacramental theology, will emerge later.

Like his Anglicanism his philosophical background shows itself both in mood and in method. While he was keen to insist on the uniqueness of Christ, and would not allow the historic incarnation to be lost or absorbed in a vague doctrine of divine immanence undergirded by Idealist philosophy, he nevertheless wanted to have a total, rational, world view in which all thought and experience could be harmonised. Appeals to the 'givenness' of historic revelation could never, for him, be an excuse for avoiding the need for such a view. In the introduction to his Riddell Memorial Lectures, '<u>Philosophy and the Cross</u>' (1931), he makes the point that contemporary theology concentrated on religious experience or the basic ideas of the Bible and historic Christianity. He saw the value of this concentration, in spite of the limitations of specialisation. But he explained that his own intention, though unfashionable, was to regard the Cross, "... not as the great <u>mysterium Christi</u> in which the religious consciousness may find the fulfilment of its adoration and self-abasement, nor as a theological doctrine which 'rationalises' the religious experience of Christendom, but rather as an abstract general law of thought and life, which shows its authority and significance outside the specifically religious elements in our nature and beyond the historical revelation enshrined in the Bible and Church." (<u>op cit</u> p 3f). Needless to say, he devoted his attention elsewhere to the narrower field of revelation, but this longing for the broader view was always present.

Somewhat paradoxically his manner of approaching it is by analysis, and sometimes almost minute analysis. He is wont to take certain theological or philosophical words or phrases which seem similar, or are in fact closely related, and spend considerable time and effort in distinguishing them and clarifying their meaning. This can be seen in his treatment of the meaning and use of universals,[1] the distinction he draws between 'cause' and 'reason',[2] and his discussion of 'faith', 'assent', 'vision', and 'reason',[3] In a very similar vein, but on a larger or more discursive scale,

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1. cf '<u>Liberalism, Modernism and Tradition</u>' pp 114ff
2. cf '<u>The Ground of Faith and the Chaos of Thought</u>' pp 9ff; and '<u>The Gospel of Divine Action</u>' pp 16ff.
3. cf '<u>The Doctrines of the Creed</u>' pp 1ff

he tends to take certain distinct theological or philosophical movements or ways of thought, analyse them, and then seek to draw them together into a synthesis.[1] The chief example of this trait is the distinction which appears in many of his books between signs and instruments, or revelation as showing meaning or effecting some purpose. This is such a prominent distinction, and so important in his thought, that we shall see it often. Of this whole method of analysis and synthesis he writes, "Hegel has made it a familar thought in philosophy that human progress must always consist first in taking to pieces some single experience or aspect of experience, and then in putting the pieces together again into a unity which the previous division has enriched. We advance, as it were, from unison, through discord, to harmony; from identity, through difference, to the organic unity in which differences are held together and reconciled." (The Christian Sacraments p 230).

These two major influences emerge as both strengths and weaknesses in his total position. The background of the catholic church at worship gives an air of depth and completeness to his theology. All doctrines are brought under an over-arching scheme of God's purpose that man should approach him in worship, and the whole is set against the background of God's plan for the entire universe only to be completed in heaven. There is thus a reverent and rounded air to Quick's theology. The disadvantage is that he is not temperamentally at home with more Protestant or Reformed theology. His description of Protestant elements in Christianity, or of the Protestant approach to sacraments, would not be recognised by many of those whom he is attempting to describe.

Similarly, while his method of analysis is often helpful, and certainly adds clarity to his presentation of his own position, it sometimes appears too precise and occasionally unsympathetic. He leaves too few loose ends. Having decided on certain divisions and labels he forces his material to fit them. Thus he insists, for instance, that Protestants must hold the views that he thinks would

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1. cf the discussion of the 'Liberal Protestant' and 'Catholic Modernist' movements in 'Liberalism, Modernism and Tradition' chaps 1 and 11; or the whole of 'Catholic and Protestant Elements in Christianity'

be logical in their position; and when he has distinguished to his own satisfaction the symbolic and instrumental approaches to the sacraments, and indeed to the entire Christian life, he insists on telling those who fall into one camp or the other what they mean by their approach. One sometimes feels it would have been more helpful, though less neat, if he had let them tell him.

For the purpose of this study his most important writings are 'The Christian Sacraments' (1927), the relevant sections of 'Doctrines of the Creed' (1938), and the posthumously published lectures on the atonement 'The Gospel of the New World' (1944). However, his attitude to current religious thought, and his own general position is best found in a number of other works, mainly earlier, and mainly in the form of lectures. It will therefore be helpful if we first attempt a brief summary of those earlier works.

His earlier work was mainly concerned with contrasting movements within the church, and we find this typical method of analysing, weighing strengths and weaknesses, and attempting a synthesis. He is always keen to give credit for the real value of movements with which he is not personally deeply sympathetic. After reading a few chapters one recognises his technique and comes to suspect that the particular position under discussion at the moment is being set up for the kill, and that many, though not all, of the kind things being said about it will be cancelled out or seriously undermined in a few concluding pages of criticism. Nevertheless his accounts of the various positions in vogue during the early years of this century appear discriminating and fair.

He makes a contrast between Liberal Protestantism on the one hand, and Catholic Modernism, or Evolutionary Idealism, on the other. The first desires to exalt facts and return to the simple 'Jesus of History', while the second is ready to let facts go and find the essential truth of Christianity in the ideas in development. Neither, he suggests, can find a satisfactory Christology, nor are any of them true to the entire New Testament witness.

Liberal Protestantism, particularly as represented by Ritschl,

is impatient of metaphysics and bases itself entirely on the humanity of Jesus, arguing that the effect of the humanity gives it the value of Godhead for us. This, Quick suggests, is an attractive programme but ultimately unsuccessful, leading to a type of 'Jesusolatry'. "It is always easy, and it is often popular in modern as it was in ancient times, to substitute a man deified or treated as God for God made man in Christ, though what could be further from the mind of Jesus it is difficult to imagine. ... Ritschl's main idea, that of deriving the Deity of our Lord from the goodness and value in experience of his historic manhood, has had a long trial, and may now fairly be said to have been found wanting." (Liberalism, Modernism and Tradition pp 17, 19). In any case we do not get the impression from the New Testament that the first Christians spent much time looking backwards to Jesus as he had been. They preferred to look upwards to the Jesus they now knew, or onwards to His return in glory.[1]

Ideas of development are no more successful. In the form of Catholic Modernism as represented by Loisy and Tyrell, where the development of doctrines in the church is seen as the essence of Christianity, the theory needs the Pope to give it reality. Lacking some authoritative voice it is unable to discern which developments are right and which, if any, are wrong. The Pope, however, had disowned it, largely because of its apparent extremism in New Testament scholarship, so that it was left floundering.

Development presented in a more philosophical guise as Evolutionary Idealism, as represented by Green and Caird, where the essence of Christianity is seen as the idea of reconciliation between human and divine through a general principle of self-sacrifice, runs out into no more than an idealistic view of man from which God is lost. In this line of thought Jesus is not isolated at all, so that there is no criterion for judging the presence of God in man. God becomes merely an immanent principle and there is nothing outside the evolutionary process. "Modern idealists... treat all outward things and happenings as symbols, more or less, of a universal

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1. cf 'Catholic and Protestant Elements in Christianity' p 18f

Spiritual Being, Who is so utterly de-localised as to be at once everywhere and no where. He cannot ever be said to act here or there, just because He is and acts everywhere at once. Everything means God, suggests God, refers to God, has its end and explanation in God, but nothing is God. So God comes to be conceived in the end almost as nothing more than a universal meaning, explanation or ideal." (ibid p 47).

It is worth setting out Quick's views on these movements, for underlying then he sees two contrasts to which he often returns; that between Hebraic and Hellenistic thinking, and that between an instrumental and a symbolic understanding of revelation and the world. His own view is that neither should be stressed to the exclusion of the other. But this does not mean that they are of equal value, or that he presents a Hellenised view of Christianity. The centrality of Jesus and the primacy of the Hebraic approach are clearly affirmed. "The religion of the historical Incarnation must always admit some sort of final appeal to the historical life which was its origin." (Catholic and Protestant Elements in Christianity p 20). Elsewhere he criticised the Chalcedonian formula because, "... one feels that ... although fatal heresies have been rejected and possibilities for a really Christian doctrine of the Incarnation left open, the saving act of God in the manhood of Jesus is the one thing left unrepresented and unconveyed in the theological statement." (The Gospel of Divine Action p 93). Yet this should not be taken to mean that the fathers had been quite wrong to use Hellenistic terms and thought forms, or that Christian theology should relapse into a positivism of revelation or give way to irrationality.

It is on this account that later he was so critical of Barthianism. He admits that he had not studied Barth's works in the original German and that Barth himself was in the process of systematising his theology. (This was in 1931). What Quick criticises is what was commonly presented in England as Barthianism. His criticism is that with its assertion that God cannot be known by human reason but only from his own, utterly miraculous, breaking in from outside in the person of Jesus, this movement tries to be more Biblical than the Bible itself. Mozley suggests that Quick's

judgement might have been different had he read the first volume of Barth's Church Dogmatics which was not available in English when he was writing his most critical comments on Bärthianism.[1] But this is perhaps unlikely, for as Mozley also says, "I suppose that Barth and Quick were as far removed from one another as it is possible for Christian theologians to be, while remaining eminenti sensu Christian theologians." (op cit p 9). The truth seems to be that Quick was opposed to this entire mode of thought. For him it showed the wrong sort of Christocentricism. In his view "The Christological problem can only be solved by a doctrine which enables us to think of the life of Jesus as God's act only because it is characteristic of God always and thus truly symbolic of His whole purpose in the world, and again to think of it as the supreme symbol both of God's nature and man's perfection only because here uniquely is the act of God." (The Gospel of Divine Action p 110). Further, for Quick, this character and purpose of God in the world, though uniquely revealed in Christ, must be rational.

Thus we find him analysing the reasons and causes of unbelief and the arguments for belief in the modern world. The points which he makes are of unequal value, but that he should engage in this sort of debate is important in showing the cast of his mind and the importance which he attached to rationality. He is critical of the view that modern physical science had ruled out both the need and the possibility of metaphysics. He is pleased that some leading scientific thinkers are once more introducing God into their reasoning. Therefore he is willing to spend a good deal of time on the thought of such men as Whitehead and Jeans, pointing out that they have revived purely rational cosmological arguments. It is not that he is too impressed by the conclusions at which they arrive. "... I do not think that they, or any other purely cosmological argument, can bring much satisfaction to Christian faith. For, apart from other considerations, a God whose existence is postulated

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1. Quick's most critical surveys are in 'The Ground of Faith and the Chaos of Thought' (1931) pp 96-107; and 'The Gospel of Divine Action' (1933) pp 103-109. The first volume of Barth's Church Dogmatics was published in 1932, E.T. 'The Doctrine of The Word of God' (1936). From Quick's later writings it does not appear that he changed his attitude on Barth.

solely in order to solve a cosmological problem, is far too like an idol called into being to obviate the difficulties of the cosmologist." However, such arguments have what might be called a certain negative apologetic value, "... the thought of such men as Jeans and Whitehead, as well as of Eddington and others, renders the utmost service to faith in showing that modern science has renounced metaphysical dogmatism and is prepared to leave open a field for spiritual philosophy. For that reason, if for no other, Christians would owe them their deepest gratitude." (The Ground of Faith and the Chaos of Thought p 86).

On a more positive note is his use of the distinction between cause and reason. External reality, he claims, shows both the order of cause and effect, and also the order of reason or purpose. He illustrates this by thinking of a man lighting a pipe. "A whole series of movements and events takes place. Pipe, tobacco and match-box are successively produced from the man's pockets. A match is taken out, and struck, and the flame applied to the tobacco." (The Gospel of Divine Action p 17). These various events and movements can be seen as links in a chain, each one caused by one before it and effecting one after it - the order of cause and effect. Alternatively the whole series can be regarded under the single heading of its purpose 'lighting the pipe' - the order of reason or purpose.

Transferring this illustration to the world of external reality it can be argued that Physical science seeks to understand the world in terms of cause and effect, and proceeds by analysis. Metaphysics seeks to see the whole, concerning itself with the over all significance or intelligible interpretation, and proceeds by synthesis. However, the two orders are in fact realised together. Hence, Quick argues, "... I think we must ultimately accept the conclusion that even the simplest fact of perception is only possible because running all through reality there is a signified order of reason as well as an efficient order of cause." (ibid p 28). Referring to Berkeley he suggests that all our perception of the world indicates that "... some mind and activity not our own is revealing itself to us through the physical nature which ultimately is its own symbol

and instrument." (ibid p 30). Similar appeals to our perception of rationality and purpose pervading the universe are scattered throughout his writings. He refers to this purpose as God.

It is perhaps significant that in pursuing this argument he refers, for the only time as far as I am aware, to the work of Oman in 'The Natural and the Supernatural'.[1] Like Oman, having established a 'super-Natural' sphere he at once assumes that he can speak of God. The truth, however, is that he has simply assumed a good deal more from revelation than he has allowed in this particular argument. Here, of course, he is better placed than Oman since he does in other places pay much more attention to revelation as God's definite action in History.

One step more is needed to complete the outline of his basic position. It is not enough simply to contrast 'cause' and 'reason', physical science and metaphysics, and to point out that the second member of each pair must also be taken into account in a total world view. Acceptance of God leads to a teleological view of the world, a purpose in which the whole created order will have a part or find a fulfilment. This is absolutely fundamental for Quick. He expresses it several times in such affirmations as "The purpose of God from which the whole world of our present experience takes its origin, and in which it finds its end and explanation, is the purpose that love eternal should fulfil itself and triumph through the free self-surrender of finite spirits which have caught the fire of its inspiration from on high." (The Gospel of Divine Action p 112). The new thing which came into the world with the Christian Church, and which cannot ultimately be included under Hebraic or Hellenistic thinking, is that a community of people knew this inspiration, and knew themselves to be caught up in this purpose. It is within the context of this over-arching purpose that the work of atonement and the doctrine of the sacraments have their place.

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1. cf 'The Gospel of Divine Action' p 29n

With his starting point - a purpose of God which is, in principle at least, open to rational perception and intended to lead to a fulfilment in which the whole of creation and world history finds its meaning in God - it is natural that he should begin his treatment of atonement by considering its necessity. That is, given that this grand purpose has somehow been marred and that salvation is needed, what is it that has disrupted God's purpose, and from what does man need to be saved? But though he begins with these problems he is keen to assert that the doctrine must always be set against the background of the wider purpose of God. The cross is not just an answer to problems. It does more than deal with man's past or present sins. Atonement sets man back in the original purpose of God which also concerns his ultimate destiny.

Pursuing this point in a slightly different way he contrasts the Johannine and Pauline approaches to the subject. The Johannine view, he suggests, begins with the person of Jesus as the self-revelation of God. Thus the incarnation becomes the starting point of theology. We know God's nature and our own relationship to Him by faith, but the future we leave in His hands - 'It does not yet appear what we shall be'. The Pauline view, on the other hand, concentrates on the act of God in Christ as redemption from sin. Thus the atonement becomes central, an act of God which finds its focus in the cross but reaches its goal in the future. Exposition of this act must therefore lead into consideration of the 'last things'. Of these two possibilities Quick takes the Pauline. Commenting on the logical connection between atonement and eschatology he writes "For myself I cannot but feel that Christian theology has on the whole failed to do justice to this logical connexion, and that some classical treatises on the doctrine of atonement are gravely incomplete, because they do not face the eschatological issues which are raised by the very nature of the doctrine itself." (Doctrines of the Creed p 190). Hence he considers together the evil from which man is delivered, the means of deliverance, and its final purpose.

It is perhaps worth digressing at this point to note that this discussion and its resolution in favour of the Pauline view give an interesting insight into Quick's mind and method. One gets the

impression, certainly in the earlier works, that he equates the Johannine approach with the Hellenistic, rational approach, and the Pauline one with the Hebraic, Biblical position. It also seems that his own training and natural inclination would lead him to embrace the first. Yet he chooses the second. There seems frequently to be a conflict between the direction in which he would like to go and the one in which he knows he must go. At the same time it seems to be, at least partly, a problem which he has created for himself by his analytical method. The distinction between the two approaches may not be so great as he has indicated. His desire for clarity leads him to make the distinction, and though he sometimes says that it is only a rough generalisation, he tends to observe it rather rigidly himself. I think he quite often makes problems for himself in this way, and his desire for clarity sometimes lays him open to the charge of misrepresentation.

To return to the main theme of the argument we must ask how God's purpose went awry, and from what it is that man needs to be delivered? This is the problem of evil. The reality of evil as the background to atonement, and a consideration of the nature of evil is found in all Quick's treatment of the subject. The indications are that it came to occupy an ever larger place in his thought. In the chapter on atonement in '<u>The Christian Sacraments</u>' it is mentioned as a problem. Clearly God's purpose in the world does not always triumph, indeed it is often rejected. This rejection is particularly clearly seen in the experience of Christ himself, but "... that rejection does not look like a mere isolated accident in the scheme of things: it is all of a piece with a certain fundamental negation of goodness, which in some sense belongs to the whole texture of life in space and time." (<u>op cit</u> p 78). Later, in '<u>Doctrines of the Creed</u>' we have a fuller analysis of possible explanations of the nature of evil seen as that from which man needs salvation. Finally the subject gets what might be called a more positive treatment, where both its nature and origin are considered, in the rather difficult opening chapter of '<u>The Gospel of the New World</u>'. The latter treatment, which Quick may well have revised or developed had he lived, combines a consideration of some influential historical and contemporary views with what must be taken as his own position.

For Christianity, he argues, the essence of evil is sin or moral wrong, and its chief characteristic is that it is destructive. It is not to be limited to pain or suffering in themselves. It is not the fact of suffering but its meaninglessness, the element of opposition, or at least incoherence, in a moral world, which offends us. Were it simply the physical suffering we could presumably argue that certain events only seem evil because we feel them to be painful. In that case we could deal with them simply by refusing to take them seriously. "Cease to feel them, and all will be well indeed. Why make such a fuss over a child mangled in a street-accident or born with a hopeless and incurable disease? Enjoy all you can, cease to heed the rest; you will have solved the problem of evil once for all, and find the world an admirable place." But in fact, "It is not sheer pain which distresses us most, but the meaning of moral evil which we read into it." (Doctrines of the Creed p 199f).

Neither must we dismiss evil as mere illusion or confuse the problem of evil with the problem of creation. Some intellectualist approaches from Plato to Hegel conclude that evil is mere error or defect in knowledge. This is to invert the Christian order. It is not so much that ignorance is evil as that sin blinds the intellect. Alternatively, various forms of monism begin from the problems of imperfection, finitude and temporality in creation, asking how these things can be if the creative power is good. There is a problem here, Quick allows, and he believes it can be met with a characteristic stress on God's self-limitation. But this is not the same as the problem of evil. What these approaches lack is an appreciation of the destructive agency of evil. There is an element of wilfulness and destructiveness in it which is not adequately covered by ideas of limitation or privation, useful though such ideas may be as far as they go. Evil is the exercise of will in opposition, and for the Christian what it opposes is both the purpose and the love of God. Hence it is impossible to resolve the problem of evil without both redirection of will and forgiveness of sin.

But we still have the problem of how to account for the existence of this perversion. Quick suggests, "The Christian

answer lies deep in the mystery of finite freedom. Finite freedom in itself is good, but it involves the possibility of evil. This possibility simply as such is also good. What actualises evil and therefore may be said to be the cause of all real evil is the act of a finite will in exercising its freedom wrongly, i.e., so as to disobey God." (The Gospel of the New World p 26). He is not unaware that this line of thought raises other problems, not least concerning cruelty in sub-human nature. One could meet this point partially by arguing that the concept of cruelty is a moral one and should not be attributed to, for instance, predatory animals. Yet this has an air of verbal juggling about it since the charge of cruelty is then simply moved back to the power which made the animal's nature what it is. The only satisfactory answer, though Quick presents it very hesitantly and tentatively, is the supposition of a fallen spirit or spirits. This keeps the cause of evil in the act of a free will outside God, a will which is allowed its real, though relative, independence by the voluntary self-limitation of God.

At this point Quick introduces a line of thought which seems to have been in his mind at least from 'The Christian Sacraments', but without very much development. Indeed perhaps it could not be clearly articulated. It is the question of how far God may be believed to have deliberately subjected his original creation to sorrow, pain and death, since he knew that sin would come into the world and that redemption would be wrought through sorrow pain and death? Jesus used sorrow and disaster, and even the sin and disobedience of men, in his work of redemption - could he have done his work in a world where they did not exist? Similarly, if Christians are those who are being brought back into God's purpose by sacrifice, as we shall see Quick argues later, then the world very much as it is now with its opportunities for suffering and sorrow seems essential. Sin and suffering are taken and used as stepping stones for progress, without them perhaps progress would not be possible. Furthermore this line of argument need not be limited to men, the evolution of sub-human creation seems to be a story of advance through sacrifice and loss.

This is a difficult line of thought. Even in attempting to

state it there is always a suspicion of looking back and being wise after the event, of trying to make the best of a bad job, or simply of being sermonic and rather over-pious. Quick, I think, does not completely avoid these pitfalls, but at the same time it is difficult to avoid the impression that he is on to something.

Sometimes he is scarcely more than sermonic. "After all the blackest crimes of ecclesiastical hypocrisy and selfishness, of official cowardice and callousness, of mob-madness and legalised brutality, now take their place in the story which makes what is for Christians the holiest and most blessed commemmoration of all time. Even representations of common dice and instruments of torture have found their way into Christian sanctuaries; and confronted by such paradoxes, the mind begins dimly to divine the method of a power which can really take away the sins of the world." (The Christian Sacraments p 83f). This line of thought can be transposed to the experience of the Christian disciple. "Perhaps the most deeply Christian hope of our souls is that in heaven we may be able to say of all the evil in the world what we have already begun to say about the crimes of those who were responsible for our Lord's death, namely, that, evil as they are, we could not now will them to have been otherwise, since even they have been made to bear their part in the triumph of God." (ibid p 93). Later he uses this type of argument as part of a theodicy. While God's ways with men may not be easy to explain or defend on the grounds of strict justice, it is the very evils in this world which made possible the redemption in Christ and which provide what might be called the raw materials for Christian sanctification and participation in redemption. "And therefore it is not unreasonable to suppose that a world-order, in which pain and death are universal, and are more acutely felt in proportion as true progress is made, may be the order fitted to be that through which love wins its universal victory, and from which it rises again in glory. Thus, while the world-order which we know with all its miseries can never be made to satisfy mere justice, the greater paradox may still be true, that through the atonement it may be found in the end to have proceeded from God's love." (Doctrines of the Creed p 212).

In his last work the argument is repeated. "An order of nature in which life has constantly to be taken and lost in order that evolutionary progress may be made seems somehow to point forward to a universal salvation wrought through sacrifice; and it is very difficult to attribute the whole principle of this evolutionary progress to sin." (The Gospel of the New World p 29). But in this last work an objection is noted and he appears slightly to withdraw. The objection is that this line of thought seems to deny that pain and death are in themselves evil. While pain may not always be so, it often is, and the Bible speaks of death as the final enemy, the consequence and penalty of sin. However, Quick notes that 'death' is an ambiguous term. "It may denote a merely physical and natural fact, of which the value is relative; it may denote that final destruction of life which the physical fact is taken to symbolise - and that undoubtedly is evil." (ibid p 30). Finally he gives up the discussion, noting that we cannot finally answer the question of the relationship of sin and death but must simply accept death as part of this present world-order marred by sin.

While this conclusion is no doubt true, it comes as rather a disappointing anti-climax to his discussion. The treatment of death seems in the end to lack the depth and Biblical understanding which Denney brought to the same subject. It is perhaps better to say with Denney that while death to unfallen man may not have been such an evil, the death of fallen man 'per se' is, at least for the Bible. The death of a Christian man must presumably be understood as the death of one who is in the process of being conformed to the image of God in Christ, and is thus nearer to the death of unfallen man. Quick could presumably have allowed such a distinction and may have wanted to add, as Denney would not have done, some qualifications on the process of being conformed to the image. Death which comes as a release from great physical suffering and is thus regarded as merciful, and therefore, on Quick's terms, as of relatively high value, may indeed be attributed to the mercy of God without denying its own inherent evil. The value is relative to the other evils of suffering which went before it, yet, to the fallen man, it remains itself an evil. It is probable that Quick draws back from such speculations because they so easily pass into judgements on the final destiny of the man

concerned. However there seems no reason why they should inevitably do so. In any case the interest of the earlier part of this discussion regarding the appropriateness of such a world-order as we know to the redemption wrought in it remains.

It is against the background of evil as destructive opposition to the loving purpose of God, brought about by the free act of the finite and created will using its freedom to disobey God, that we must set the doctrine of atonement. In this background man, the immediate object of atonement, is distinguished from the rest of creation by the image of God. Quick looks very briefly at Ireaneus' distinction between the image of God which fallen man retains in some form, and the likeness which he loses; and also at Brunner's criticism of all attempts to distinguish between what was lost at the fall and what remains. His own approach is slightly different from both and seems (pace Mozley op cit p 31) to be less obviously scriptural.

The Bible seems to distinguish three stages in which man might be said to possess the image in different ways, or even to be related to different images. There is the image of God in unfallen man as it existed in Adam; the image which remains in fallen man by virtue of his having been created by God; and the image of God in Christ to which Christian man is being conformed. Quick, however, seems to work with two slightly different stages - the image which existed in unfallen man, and seems in some distorted but real sense to remain; and the image which was held before unfallen man as a goal. This second form of the image is still held before fallen man as a goal in that it is the condition for which man was created, his final condition when he has acknowledged God's purpose and surrendered himself to it. For unfallen man it would have required obedience to reach this goal, for fallen man it is now more difficult than ever to obtain. The substance of the image in both cases is freedom to choose in relative independence. Quick speaks of two freedoms, "...to each condition corresponds its characteristic freedom. To the first the freedom of responsible choice, ownership, government. To the second the utterly unburdened and glorious liberty of the children of God, where man is finally at home in his heavenly Father's house." (ibid p 38). The present state of man, therefore, is due to misuse of freedom in the

first condition.

The relative independence of man is due to God's voluntary self-limitation by which he allows his creatures to will and achieve ends of which he himself is not the efficient cause. Man may therefore use his relative freedom to resist God. That is sin, the assertion of man's independent lordship and his refusal to obey. However, in spite of that, there remains that in man which knows, or intuits, that his real good and ultimate end is in submission to God. His choice not so to submit has given sin a foothold in man and has marred his nature. He still has the capacity to be a child of God but has lost the power. "Not that there is no good left in him, or that the divine likeness has been lost. But now man's goodness is insufficient to attain salvation without a fresh and special intervention of divine grace." (ibid p 39). Henceforth man is dogged by conflicting moods of self-assertion and fear. This is transmitted to each succeeding generation, though, "It should be noticed that in so far as man's original God-likeness has been marred in those to whom 'original' sin is transmitted, their personal responsibility for acting sinfully is diminished." (ibid p 43). It is probable that even unfallen man would have needed training and discipline to achieve God's intended purpose for him, though he would naturally have chosen the higher good. Fallen man needs more than training, exhortation or moral example, he needs a power from outside himself which nevertheless becomes in some sense his own. How man reached his present state of 'fallen-ness' it is not possible to say, but it may be that we are obliged to speak in terms of an historical fall of the race, though such language remains speculative and mythical.

The power which man needs to bring him back into God's good purpose comes from the atoning work of Christ. It consists not only of his death on the cross but also of his resurrection and present lordship. The whole work of Christ has a double-sided significance, involving both something done for man which he could never have done for himself, and a continuing process into which he is taken up. We noted Quick's opinion that many classical treatments of the doctrine are defective because they concentrate exclusively on the death of Christ. It is also an error, in his view, to concentrate simply on

what is done for man. He is looking for a theory which does justice to the eschatological element and allows for what is done in man, or for man's participation.

His analysis of the different theories of atonement in 'Doctrines of the Creed', and his sketch of the history of the doctrine in 'The Gospel of the New World', while both interesting are not very different from those found elsewhere. We will treat them briefly except where his special emphases are found.

From the Old Testament he noted two approaches, the prophetic and the priestly. The prophets, he acknowledges, reach greater spiritual heights and were not subject to the temptations of immorality, formalism and superstition which are always likely to beset priestly religion. Yet the prophetic teaching had two major weaknesses. First the prophets had no real doctrine of grace. They put before the people the will of God; they show clearly the essentially moral nature of sin; and then they demand that their hearers should repent and conform to God's will. But in all this they offer no help in bringing this moral transformation about. They were Augustinian in their attitude to God's power, but Pelagian in their assumption that all could repent at will. Thus, secondly, they do not seem to recognise how deep-seated sin is, both in man and the world, or how impossible it is for man to free himself from it unaided. Occasional indications that they do see deeper and look for a future action of God to change men's hearts (Jer 31:31ff; Ezek 11:19ff) serve only to make plainer the normal drift of their teaching.

Priestly religion, on the other hand, sees that sin is more deeply ingrained and cannot be dealt with by exhortation. It can also allow for two distinctions which were later to be made, and to become very important, in Western Catholicism. The first is that between material sin - every sinful act; and formal sin - a sinful act which is due to the conscious personal choice of the agent. The second is that between the 'vitium' of sin - the evil entail from the environment and from past sinful acts which renders the agent unable to choose differently; and the 'reatus' of sin - that sinfulness of which the agent is personally guilty. Broadly speaking the prophets

saw all sin as formal and involving '<u>reatus</u>', and took little account of material sin and the '<u>vitium</u>' which taints life like a disease. But Priestly religion did see the reality of material sin and the '<u>vitium</u>', and it provided, in the sacrificial cultus, some treatment for it. "...the priestly religion ... treats sin less as a matter of personal choice and responsibility than as a taint or defilement with which the sinner is, as it were, infected. The taint of sin inevitably cuts a man off from God's favour; but sacrifice has been appointed by God's own merciful ordinance for the removal of the taint and the restoration of the sinner." (<u>Doctrines of the Creed</u> p 218). Furthermore, the priestly approach was more humane in that it put means of atonement within the reach of the normal man in a way that the prophets did not.

In the New Testament it is clear that atonement is seen as a present fact through the work of Christ. The question then is, how is that work to be understood? Quick suggests that there are three general characteristics of New Testament teaching on the subject which must be maintained in any theory of atonement. First, "The atoning death of Christ is regarded as inseparable from his risen life; and its effect in the individual Christian is inseparable from the gift of a new life to him." (<u>The Gospel of the New World</u> p 52). It is interesting to note that Quick's criticism of the juridical or substitutionary view is that it overlooks Christ's risen life, whereas most other critics complain that it neglects his earthly life. Secondly, "... the new life initiates a transformation of man's whole being and not merely of that part of it which in modern language we should call spiritual." (<u>ibid</u> p 57). Thus the new life is not a matter of 'spiritual' experience in the sense of enjoying inward or non-bodily sensations. It is rather the whole of man's life quickened by the risen humanity of Christ operating through the gift of the Holy Spirit and characterised by 'agape'. Finally, "Although the transformation ... has already begun in Christians, it is still incomplete, and must remain incomplete as long as this world lasts and the Christian continues to exist in it." (<u>ibid</u> p 61). Thus eschatology is part of the doctrine of atonement.

Turning to the usual classification of 'theories of the

atonement' he notes four - subjective, classic, juridical and sacrificial - though allowing that elements from different theories are likely to overlap. On the subjective view he quotes Abelard and Rashdall with some approval but points out, again, that more is needed than revelation and example. He is also rather dismissive in his treatment of the classic approach. Talk of overcoming evil powers appears objective but it is not easy to see how it is applied. If the power of sin is personified and the cross is seen as victory over it then one has the problem of explaining the continuing power of sin. If, on the other hand, this theory is simply drawing attention to the victory of perfect holiness in the person of Christ, then it becomes another version of the subjective view. The only way to make it objective is by bringing in ideas of a ransom paid to Satan, or the deception of Satan as by a baited hook, but such approaches are not morally acceptable.

We have thus to choose between the juridical view, in which Christ suffers vicariously, paying a penalty as man's substitute, or the sacrificial view. Quick acknowledges the place occupied by the juridical view in the history of the doctrine. But he is not happy with it. He traces its growing prominence to the decline of the eschatological note of the New Testament, the sense of new life and victory given to the faithful in the Christian community, together with the legalistic tone of Western thought, especially in the Medieval period. The result of these two influences is a growing individualism. "Time is thought of less as the process of events whereby God is bringing this world to an end in order to establish the glorious and perfect universe of the world to come; it is thought of more as the process by which each individual soul reaches its eternal destiny in heaven or hell." (ibid p 72). This change of outlook is accompanied by a concern for merit in the confidence of which man can face the coming judgement.

Individualism and legalism are seen as the bases of the juridical view. Anselm gave it its classical Medieval expression, seeing Jesus as offering satisfaction and thus clearing man's past account. The Reformers kept the legal framework but whereas Anselm and the middle ages generally think in terms of civil law they think in terms of

criminal law. Instead of seeing God as a plaintiff demanding his legal 'satisfaction' in court, God is now seen as a judge and man as the criminal in the dock. For the second way of thinking Jesus pays a fine or bears a penalty.

Quick has several criticisms of this entire way of thought. The chief one, to which we have now referred several times, is that the New Testament sense of the Christian becoming part of a community, and, with the community, being involved in a process which is moving towards future fulfilment, is lost. Merit can only deal with the past. If a transfer were possible it would only avail for sins which will have been committed. There is no offer of help for life. Similarly a punishment borne can be understood as dealing with past sins, wiping the slate clean as it were, but not as giving power to overcome evil in the future. Luther, he agrees, does have the idea of the defeat of tyrants. "But he did not, like St. Paul, emphasise the close connection between the new life imparted through the atonement and the resurrection life of the world to come. ... On the whole then it cannot be said that the effect of the Reformation was to restore the gospel of the atonement as it appears in the New Testament." (ibid p 81f). One might argue that Quick's statement of the case is hardly fair either to Anselm or to Luther, both of whom did attempt to provide for the future, however the criticism of the juridical view is weighty.

Apart from its inability to fit in which this broader view of God's purpose, the juridical view is open to other objections. As we have noted before it puts too much weight on the manhood of Christ. He is almost seen as wresting something from God. The whole idea of the work of atonement proceeding from God's love tends to be obscured. Furthermore the idea of 'penal' substitution cannot be accepted if 'Substitution' is strictly understood. It is not possible to consider that Christ's sufferings were the same as sinners would have had to endure, or the unrepentant will yet endure. Of what could such sufferings consist? Again, one for whom a substitute acts is affected only negatively, he is relieved of something but otherwise goes on as before. It is hard to believe that any Christian has every really believed this. "In so far as there was any real substitution, the purpose of the crucifixion must have been that the sinner might be

unaffected by the cross, except in so far as he would be released from enduring the penalty for sin. But no Christian can seriously affirm that the cross had any such purpose." (Doctrines of the Creed p 229). In fact there was an effect of the cross for the Christian in the new life of fellowship with God.

He is obliged to admit that the New Testament does sometimes seem to speak of Christ as the sin-bearer enduring a penalty. Here we come to the crux of the argument as far as he is concerned. These passages were wrongly given a legal interpretation and were allowed, as it were, to dictate the meaning of other passages which should have been understood in a sacrificial sense. The great mistake has been to merge the juridical and sacrificial views, and to understand the purpose of sacrifice as penal substitution. When Paul uses sacrificial language he should not be understood juridically. Conversely, "... whenever he or any other New Testament writer suggests that Christ bore our sins or the penalty for them, the implied thought about the atonement is juridical, and is really irrelevant to the religious ideas which underlay the sin-offerings of the Pentateuch." (ibid p 227). In fact, as we shall see him argue later, the sacrificial animals did not bear the penalty of sin. The New Testament apparently connects sacrifice and penal substitution on the basis of Isaiah 53. But in that passage the connection is obscure since sacrifice is not clearly in mind until v 10. In fact, he argues, the two ideas are only definitely joined together in one New Testament passage, and that an allusion to Isaiah 53:12 in Hebrews 9:28, "... an epistle which no where else speaks of Christ as sin-bearer but confines itself to sacrificial language." (The Gospel of the New World p 100).

What then can we make of those hints of a juridical view and of penal substitution which are found in the New Testament? In 'Doctrines of the Creed' he is content to say that we must not interpret the idea of Christ suffering instead of us with any logical exactness. He is to be taken as our representative not our substitute, and this line of thought is best subsumed under the sacrificial view. He suffers vicariously and thus allows the moral demand of justice, and also moves the sinner to repentance. What he suffered was on our

behalf, but the repentant sinner must still suffer for himself, though "What he has to suffer henceforth is transformed from mere punishment into a discipline gladly accepted because by it he is made one with Christ." (op cit p 230). Though Quick has to allow that such a presentation of the juridical theory is incomplete since it remains 'subjective' working by the influence which the cross exerts on men rather than by any objective action.

Later, in 'The Gospel of the New World', without materially changing his position, he suggests that one can refer to Christ's death as penal, but not as substitutionary. The Old Testament, he suggests, speaks of the holy death of a sacrificial victim and the unholy and penal death of a criminal. Sinful man has become incapable of the first and is doomed to the second. Jesus by becoming man and dying as a man transformed the common and unholy death of sinful man into the holy death of sacrifice.

Thus, as we shall see, Quick allows a lot which would normally be considered under the juridical view to be included under the sacrificial one. This is probably quite right, but it illustrates again the confusion he gets himself into by over-subtle analysis rigidly adhered to. In his discussion of the juridical view on its own, before he has moved on to the sacrificial one, he shows himself at his most analytical and, I think, most annoying. While he admits on several occasions that Paul probably did not make neat distinctions, he insists on making and forcing them. This we read, "But, if he... (Paul)...had been pressed on the point, he would not, I think, have hesitated to declare that it is God's love which in Christ has provided a way of deliverance from his own wrath. He would certainly have agreed that we must interpret all juridical language about the atonement in the light of the principle that both the cross and its effects are the work of God's own love." (ibid p 227). And later, regarding the juridical and sacrificial views, "... it is probable that St. Paul never made any clear distinction in his own mind between the two." (ibid p 229). We also find in this discussion his habit of not being content to argue that a certain position is wrong, but, patronisingly, going on to explain what its exponents really meant by it. In this vein he will not allow other, perhaps livelier,

understandings of the theories he dismisses, largely apparently because they are ruled out by the analysis which he has imposed. The chief criticism of Quick here must be that it is not enough simply to find out what juridical or sacrificial terminology should mean in some ideal theological world. The important thing is how these ideas were used. And in use, even in the Bible, there was probably a good deal of confusion and overlapping of ideas. Interestingly he acknowledges this as he goes on to set out the sacrificial theory.

Here, for Quick, is the true basis for understanding the atonement. It is, he argues, the only theory found in the New Testament. It can draw within itself the important elements of truth found in the other theories without their admixture of error, and, for him the most important point, it enables the expression of the eschatological note found in the New Testament, the idea of the redeemed community bound for heaven. Thus he writes, "I venture to suggest that what theology needs is a careful rethinking and restatement of a theory of the atonement which is fundamentally sacrificial rather than juridical - a theory which finds its starting point in the only theory of the atonement which the New Testament presents, viz. that of Hebrews." (The Gospel of the New World p 94). It is somewhat strange that he nowhere refers to another notable attempt to use the theology of sacrifice for both atonement and sacraments which is found in the work of F.C.N. Hicks. But Hicks' book 'The Fulness of Sacrifice' (1930), is included in the Bibliography of 'Doctrines of the Creed' and he seems to assume many of the conclusions of Hicks' Biblical work on the meaning of sacrifice.

What then does he see as the essence of the theory of Hebrews 9? "The real intention of the old sacrifices for sin was that the blood of an unblemished victim, representing a stainless life offered to God in death, might be applied so as to remove defilements caused by sin, in order that man might draw near to God in worship, and communion between man and God be established." (Doctrines of the Creed p 233).

His doctrine of man, outlined above, was that man was created

in God's image in order to find fulfilment in offering himself totally to God. Even apart from sin this seems to demand something analagous to death. Following the intrusion of sin it becomes impossible for man to make this self-offering, both because his ingrained pride rebelled against it, and also because the effect of sin was to render man's life unworthy of being so offered. Henceforth man's death could not be a pure offering but is instead the penal death of a criminal. In this situation the sacrificial cultus was provided by God as a means of dealing with sin by removing its defilement and making atonement possible. The blameless life of the animal victim represented what man knew he should offer but could not, and the blood of the victim, representing its pure life, was applied to man to expiate his sin.

Yet the offerings of the cultus were insufficient. God asked of man a voluntary offering of a pure life, and such an offering had to be complete. The sacrificial animals were pure, but their purity was, as it were, accidental. They had not had to overcome temptation in moral struggle such as man knew. And they were not voluntary. Nevertheless, inadequate as they were, they were the best that man could do in his present sinful state. Even if a man offered his own life that would not satisfy the condition of purity, and because of his sin his death would have a penal quality. Jesus, however, is able to offer a sinless life voluntarily. "The new revelation in Jesus Christ is this. The perfect sacrifice must be a perfectly sinless priest-victim self-offered in a voluntary death, as Hebrews so carefully argues. But - here is the new thing - this perfect sacrifice can only be achieved by the divine life which in Jesus has shown itself willing to share the utterly unholy death of the criminal which is the penalty for sin. Thus the utterly unholy and common death which is the due fate of all men, is itself by Christ's love transformed in his own case into the entirely holy death of perfect sacrifice." (The Gospel of the New World p 101). He thus draws together the ideas of penal and sacrificial death.

This interpretation of the atonement has not been as influential in the history of Christian thought as it has deserved to be for two main reasons. First there has been the misunderstanding of the

meaning of sacrifice. When the church was no longer familiar with sacrifice it mistakenly supposed that the offerers guilt was transferred to the victim which then, as a substitute, bore the punishment due in order that God might be propitiated. "... whereas the truth was that the victim could only be sacrificed or offered to God because it was thought not to be contaminated with the offerer's sins, and that in the ceremonies of atonement the use of blood signified the expiation or washing away or 'Covering' of sin by a sinless life which in dying had been offered to and accepted by God. This, quite clearly, is the thought of Hebrews." (ibid p 101). Thus one must not think in terms of propitiation - that is that the sacrifice was directed towards God to cause him to change his attitude towards the sinner from one of wrath to one of mercy, but of expiation - that is the sacrifice was directed towards the defilement of sin to remove it and make communion with God a possibility. Here Quick is dependent on the work of C.H. Dodd on the meaning of ἱλάσκεσθαι[1]

Secondly, this approach has been neglected because of the austere nature of the thought of the epistle to the Hebrews in which it is found. In another context Quick describes Hebrews as the most religious book in the New Testament. He explains his use of the word 'religious' thus, "Hebrews is marked out among all the books of the Bible by the interest which it shows in man's approach to God, whereas elsewhere the main emphasis is laid upon God's approach to men." (Doctrines of the Creed p 113n). We do not find in Hebrews a great stress on love, either of the Father or of the Son. Thus the theory of Hebrews remains narrowly sacrificial. It does not keep the truth of the juridical view that Christ in dying did also, in love, bear the penalty of sin. The Church, rightly Quick implies, noted this lack, and preferred to look for its interpretation of atonement to the words of Paul or John where the element of divine love is more prominent. Thus in using the sacrificial theory from Hebrews this connection of Christ's self-sacrifice with the love of God has to be supplied. But this does not require a major operation or detract from the advantages of this approach.

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1. cf Dodd Romans pp 54ff; and J.T.S. Vol XXXII pp 352-360.

With this modification we see that in this theory manhood is able to do in Jesus what it was originally intended to do, sacrifice itself entirely to God and receive from him in the resurrection the more glorious life which was always God's intention for man. This new, risen and glorified humanity, which is an actuality only in Jesus, is imparted to his followers who thereby partake of the world to come and receive power to complete their own self-sacrifice. For it is important to see that the new life they are given involves them in a willingness to share the common lot of sinners, as he did, up to a common death. The blood of Christ, therefore, is seen as both expiating sin and releasing the power of a new life of perfect obedience. This life means in the Christian, as it meant in his lord, a life of self-sacrifice to God and his purpose.

A great advantage of this view is that it keeps, as no other can, the advantages of other theories. "Sin indeed, being evil, cannot be offered to God; but the penalty for sin, when voluntarily accepted by the sinless out of love for the sinner, may be; for this acceptance changes the very act of undergoing the penalty into the holy self-sacrifice which God's love accepts as such. ... (thus)... we can fuse the sacrificial and juridical and Abelardian interpretations ... into a single theory, and we can include and reconcile together the language of all three." (The Gospel of the New World p 104f). Thus it seems that Christ in dying bears the penalty of sin as a man, as all men must in death, but he does not bear it instead of others. By offering his penal death as a sacrifice and shedding his blood he makes available, through his blood, a means of cleansing for others as the sacrificial animals had. Equally important, the shed blood represents the life of the victim now made available to others. The blood in this view of sacrifice is taken to mean the life released and offered, rather than the death of the victim. Though clearly it is a life offered through death.

If Quick's statement of the sacrificial view is accepted the way is open for manhood to return to the purpose of God from which it had fallen. As he began his thinking on the subject from the doctrine of man, he is obliged to conclude with a consideration of eschatology. Can any more be said of the conclusion of God's purpose both with man

and with the rest of creation?

Here again he distinguishes the Hebraic view, which sees God as bringing about his purpose through historical events, from the Platonic or Hellenistic one, which does not think of a goal of history but conceives of God as perfect reality outside of and veiled by creation and experience. Though there are traces of Platonism in Hebrews and John, and certainly it became very influential in Christian thinking at a very early point, it is clear that the New Testament keeps a basically Hebraic approach and we must think of God's purpose being worked out in a temporal sequence leading to judgement. However, the idea of judgement must be kept subordinate to that of purpose. Similarly, though it is traditional to speak of 'last things', the idea of 'last' here must also be understood in the context of purpose. That is, it must be seen as that which completes the purpose and gives meaning to the rest. But the previous parts also have their important place. The finishing touches of a work of art are the last parts which give meaning to the whole, but the entire work depends also on the previous touches to make its point.

For individuals the end of God's purpose is total self-sacrifice to him. In the physical world that is impossible apart from death. Death thus becomes sacramental of the completed sacrifice. Choices made before death decide man's final destiny, but his progress may not be complete at death. The Christian speaks of this final destiny as a resurrection. Quick traces the history of the idea of resurrection and is keen to distinguish it from immortality seen as mere prolongation of life, or from nature myths. It means for him true life restored by God through sacrifice. "The final winning of life, which issues from the final giving up, constitutes and reconstitutes in glory the eternal wholeness of the self and personality. This is the essential meaning of resurrection for the individual. ... And the final issue of death, which resurrection symbolises, is a supra-temporal reconstitution of the whole self finally surrendered to God - a condition in which the whole temporal history of the self is included as somehow present." (ibid p 113).

However God's purpose is not only for individuals, and need not

be only for the human race. God, after all, created an entire universe and may be presumed to have some purpose for all of it. From his earliest writings Quick keeps the idea of God being present to, or inspiring, the whole of creation. The uniqueness of his presence in Christ does not rule out the reality of his presence in the rest of creation. It is plain from the title of his last work that Quick wishes to speak of the proleptic inauguration of a renewed world order. Unfortunately this is never worked out. Perhaps it is a line of thought which cannot be adequately stated but simply intuited or conveyed by hints.

Quick gives hints on two levels. He speaks regretfully of the church's disengagement from public life at the time of the Reformation. Luther, he argues, stressed personal piety and other-worldliness, and, though Calvin tried to subordinate the state to the church, from the Reformation onwards religion became simply one aspect of man's life among others. Quick regrets this and urges the church to seek to penetrate all areas of life and to seek to make all life holy and worthy of God. In a fallen world, however, this could never be totally successful, thus his second set of hints. The church must offer itself to God, and the individual Christian must offer himself, as Christ did, on the world's behalf. In doing this "... the Christian may believe that in and through Christ's self-sacrifice the self-sacrifice of other men for their fellows has atoning value for the final reconciliation of the world to God." (ibid p 114). In support of this he suggests that when Jesus calls upon his followers to be the salt of the earth, salt is used as a symbol for sacrifice. By their sacrifice Christians are to consecrate all creation as an offering to God.

This could be said to lead to universalism. Quick points out in several places that universalism has good Biblical support, it is not based on humanitarian principles alone. It might also be argued that it is the ultimate assertion of God's sovereignty that his purpose should finally and fully triumph. But the Bible provides stronger support for the anti-universalist position, though not for a doctrine of eternal punishment. It seems therefore that God, having given man freedom, demands a willing personal response. A negative response

must therefore be a possibility. While a Christian might hope for universal salvation to be true, he cannot advance it as a theological doctrine.

Man's response to the work of atonement - both his reception of what has been done for him and his participation in the offering of Christ, that is his own self-sacrifice, leads to a consideration of the church and sacraments. Of 'The Christian Sacraments', Mozley suggests that here, "Quick may be said to have reached the height of his powers. It is the most important contribution to sacramental theology which has come from the Church of England during the present century..." (op cit p 7). Horton Davies describes it as "The century's classic philosophical and theological study of the theme..." (op cit p 310). Yet it is interesting to notice that Quick pays no attention to the historical origins of either the church or the sacraments. Even in 'Liberalism Modernism and Tradition', and 'Catholic and Protestant Elements in Christianity', where he contrasts traditions which appeal to history with those which concentrate on evolution and development, he does not deal with how or why the church actually came into being and the sacraments were instituted. The great work 'The Christian Sacraments' is confessedly a philosophical treatment. He practically refuses to consider what happened in the Upper Room at Jesus' last supper with his disciples, suggesting, rather dismissively, "Narrow pedantry and unimaginative literalism in exegesis have ever been chief obstacles to the understanding of the mind of Jesus. It is only when we consider what He has been and is in the history of human life and thought, that we can hope in some degree to enter into His mind, and so to give a true exposition of His meaning and intention in particular words and acts." (op cit p 188). This seems to overlook completely the possibility of a more responsible and imaginative exegesis. So we have a treatment of church and sacraments in which both are accepted as 'given', they are simply there, parts of the Christian life. Indeed he is nearly half way through the book before we have a definition of a sacrament.

Basic to his whole treatment is the distinction between a symbolic and an instrumental approach. Given that outward realities

are related to inward realities, the relation can be either symbolic in that it symbolises, signifies or expresses a truth by conveying suggestions through the emotions or intellect, (Quick seems to use 'symbolise', 'signify', or 'express' virtually interchangeably); or it can be instrumental in that outward reality is a tool which effects some purpose. "Instrumentality is the relation of a thing to that which is effected by it; significance the relation of a thing to that which is suggested by it. Instrumentality is the special property of acts, extended to cover that with which the action is performed. Significance is the special property of language, extended to cover all that is used as expressive." (ibid p 12).

The distinction is an abstraction, probably no individual would hold completely to one side of it and totally exclude the other. Yet, as an abstraction, it usefully indicates different spiritual approaches. The symbolic approach tends to see the whole world as symbolic or sacramental of the presence of God within or behind it. Its characteristic mood is contemplation. The instrumental approach tends to dualism, seeing God as distinct from the world but intervening in certain specific acts or rites. Here the characteristic mood would be an ethical response or practical activity.

Unfortunately, though he says that the distinction must not be forced, Quick himself seems to force it too far. He wants to argue that the typical Catholic approach to sacraments is instrumental, stressing what is actually done by them; while the typical Protestant approach is symbolic, making them a kind of acted parable or sermon explaining what is in any case the truth. As a rough generalisation on one point this might do. But if it is carried too far it can be confusing or even false. For instance it is generally the Protestant who is most inclined to stress the importance of specific historical acts of revelation, while the Catholic is most inclined to see the incarnation as expressing what is always true of God's attitude to the world. This also is a generalisation, but it is generally true. Thus Catholic or Protestant can appear on either side of the distinction, making the distinction itself less clear, and perhaps less useful than Quick appears to think. In fact he goes on to argue that both emphases are given their proper weight in his own 'catholic' approach.

This may be true, but he does not help his case by forcing an antithesis apparently in order to make the subsequent synthesis appear more impressive.

Having made the distinction Quick moves on to consider the life of Christ as the central and supreme sacrament. In him we see both the symbolic and the instrumental aspects. For Christianity the incarnation is unique, it must not be taken simply as support for a vague idea of divine immanence, "... to interpret the life of Jesus as the supreme sacrament is to show that in this outward, historical life lived in space and time there is both uniquely expressed and uniquely operative the highest purpose of goodness which all life and nature are destined to fulfil." (ibid p 57). The symbolic aspect is shown in Jesus' life which, Quick argues, embodies the values of beauty, goodness and truth, the threefold division of abolute goodness. The instrumental aspect is shown in the work of atonement. Here the principle of redemption through loss, which Quick traces in other spheres, is uniquely operative. For though both incarnation and death are described as unique, they are not alien to the rest of experience. Quick accepts that both the values which he finds summed up in Jesus, and the view of atonement as advance through loss, may be known to us through God's general concern for his creation; his 'inspiration' which may be seen in all genuine goodness; and his purpose which must he held as permeating and undergirding the whole of creation. "... the affirmation that Jesus Christ is the Incarnate Son is based upon the acknowledgement that His life uniquely represents to us the divine purpose operative in the whole world of our experience." (ibid p 102).

Accepting Christ's life as the supreme sacrament, and the uniqueness of his life and work as expressive of general principles available to us elsewhere in our experience, a sacrament in the more generally accepted sense of the term could be an extension both of the incarnation and of the atonement. In fact anything which helps us to see God's purpose for the world and to co-operate with it may be called a sacrament. In practice however we tend to limit our use of the word in at least two ways. First, a sacrament is a representative member of a class, or a part of a whole. This idea of representation is very important for Quick, and he gives various illustrations of it.

Thus Sunday is in this sense a representative day, a church is a representative place. The idea is that the member chosen should represent the ideal relationship of the whole class to God, and be a means of establishing that relationship. Certain days and places are declared holy, and thus separated from other days and places, in order to indicate that all times and all places are ideally holy, but also, by their use, to make that ideal effective. Thus, in the supreme example, Jesus' manhood is separated from other manhood to represent what manhood ideally is and to enable others to reach the ideal.

Secondly, the use of the word is normally limited to certain ritual acts. A fuller definition should be, "... a ritual act, using a certain form and matter, which both represents some universal relation of human life to God through Christ, and also, in thus representing all life, makes life worthy to be thus represented." Understood like this, "... all sacraments are truly extensions, interpretations, applications, of the life of Jesus Christ in Whom the meaning of all is summed up, and from Whom they derive their effective power." (ibid pp 108, 110).

It is an aberration to treat the sacraments magically as the only means whereby that particular relation to God can be made real. The safeguard against this is to stress their representative character. They do not insert something from outside, but elicit something which is in any case true. "The action of a sacrament therefore must be always such as to elicit from man what he has it in him to be. And because man can only become in fulness of growth that same thing which in germ he already is, the sacraments do their work of eliciting partly by representing to man his ideal relation to God as a universal truth already realised, which he only needs faith to apprehend." (ibid p 115). However, they do not simply represent realities, they actualise them. They are effectual means in the process by which the realities come about. Thus the symbolic and instrumental aspects are both kept, though now one and now the other may be dominant.

Of the individual sacraments, he gives a largely symbolic interpretation of baptism and a more instrumental one of the eucharist. His treatment of baptism is rather brief. He implies that when it

was applied only to adults the instrumental aspect would have been more prominent, but, accepting that it is now largely applied to infants that is no longer the case. An example of his accepting the sacraments as they now are in the church rather than considering their origin and history.

Baptism now is the sacrament of divine fatherhood. Ideas of ablution and resurrection are involved, but these are best seen as fulfilment of what is means to be a child of God. It is not asserted that God is 'wily-nily' the father of all men. Quick prefers the metaphor of kingship for God's relation to all man, but fatherhood may be said to be his purpose. Looked at from the other point of view, all are subject to God whether they will it or not, yet they are also potentially his children. Baptism symbolises the transition from the first relationship to the second. It does not establish a privileged position since, in line with his ideas of representation, the separateness of the child of God is measured by his capacity to represent what is potentially true of all men.

Quick's aversion for the instrumental interpretation of baptism is based on his uneasiness about the doctrine of original sin and the complicated arguments about the effect of baptism upon it. It is simply not true to experience, he argues, that baptism removes original sin. Presumably he means there is no necessary observable moral difference between the baptised and non-baptised. Therefore it is easier to speak of baptism as symbolising more than it effects, symbolising the beginning of a process which continues throughout life. This brings it in line with the moral teaching of the epistles where Christians are told that they <u>are</u> now risen with Christ, but are also given practical moral advice.

However he seems reluctant to abandon instrumentality completely, and finally settles for a limited instrumental element in the bringing of the child into the Christian community. Thus, having stressed the symbolism, he writes, "Nevertheless Baptism is itself a critical and decisive moment in the process of which it is the symbol. It marks and characterises the soul as God's child and member of his family, so that all its subsequent growth in God's grace is but an eliciting or

bringing to light of what its baptism implied." (ibid p 179). He never, as far as I am aware, says what these marks and characteristics of the soul are. Presumably they should distinguish the baptised from the unbaptised or, since the sacrament is not the only means whereby the particular relation to God is made real, the Christian from the non-Christian. He sees that in the New Testament period such a distinction seemed possible, indeed expected. The gifts of the spirit seem more sudden in their appearance, as they often still are in missionary situations. However, the change in the church's situation must be accompanied by a change of emphasis in its theology, hence the chief stress now must be on the symbolic aspect.

One has the impression that he was anxious to deal with baptism as briefly as could decently be managed before moving on to the eucharist. Here he writes at much greater length and with more apparent feeling. As with baptism there is a symbolic aspect here. The acts of offering and communion are symbolical. But whereas baptism is concerned with something once symbolised and then worked out, the eucharist is "... the constantly repeated act from which the soul draws its spiritual food." (ibid p 186). As such it must do something now in the present for the believer. Thus symbolism is not enough. At times he writes as if symbolism can pass into instrumentalism by being raised to a higher power, "The symbolisation of a past fact, if it be truly expressive, must always in some sense bridge the gulf of time, make the past present, and actually convey the reality of that which it commemorates. And we may well believe that in the Eucharistic action, proceeding from the living Christ Who was dead, this power of the expressive symbol is raised to its highest point." (ibid p 203). More usually he simply joins the two ideas, "In the Eucharist, therefore, symbolic meaning and actual effect are more and more joined and fused together without any predominance of one or subordination of the others. In it, therefore, there must be a real presence of the Lord different from that which is found in any other sacrament." (ibid p 187).

We noted that he does not spend much time on questions of history. As far as he is concerned the question is not so much whether our interpretation of the sacrament is precisely what Jesus meant at the

Last Supper, but whether it is consonant with his whole life and work. With all men what is consciously in the field of attention at any one time is not the whole of the man's attention. Thus our interpretation of Jesus' words and actions may be richer and, in a sense, truer than even he intended at the time. "... if we thus find in them a meaning which goes beyond what many conceive to have been the limitations of our Lord's conscious knowledge before His Crucifixion, we can still maintain that this meaning nevertheless was in a true sense in the Lord's mind, and that one great purpose of the sending of the Holy Spirit was to enable us to exhibit ever freshly the riches of meaning which were latent in what our Lord said and did upon earth." (ibid p 191) This seems a crucial step in Quick's argument, virtually cutting him adrift from the possibility of criticism based on historical study and exegesis of the New Testament. The central point must always be that true communion is participation in Jesus' self-sacrifice. This can be accepted not simply because he intended it at the time but because it fits in with his entire purpose. Questions concerning the relation of Jesus' person to the elements, or the relation of the entire sacrament to the sacrifice at Calvary cannot be answered by reference to His words alone, "...the truest doctrine must always be that which enables faithful Christians to hold most surely that in the Eucharist, as in a rite symbolising the deepest meaning of all Christian living, they are made partakers of the life offered for them on Calvary, in order that in the end their communion with that life may be fulfilled in the open and glorious vision of their Saviour before the throne of God." (ibid p 194).

Underlying this apparent indifference to history appears to be the recognition of two major differences between the Last Supper and the Christian sacrament which are themselves historical. In the first place Christians do not now have Christ physically with them as the first disciples did. Second, and much more important, is the result of this. At the Last Supper the chief idea in Jesus' mind appears to be that of the Messianic Banquet to which he calls his disciples. This was in essence a spiritual communion realised through bearing the cross. But when achieved it would be a communion with him who was then physically on his way to his own cross. But now the situation must be different. Christians now are assisted in their

cross-bearing by partaking of his life which has already conquered. What still lay in the future for Jesus at the Last Supper - his death and resurrection - has now happened and must be reckoned with. Subsequent observances of the rite cannot be the same as the Last Supper, but must take account of the Christian's present opportunity of participating in Christ's work, and partaking of his life, as he offers his self-sacrifice.

Quick now turns to consider what he takes to be the two major problems of eucharistic theology, the ideas of sacrifice and presence. We have seen his ideas on sacrifice. Man's chief end is a voluntary self-sacrifice to God. In so far as anything other than himself is offered the intention is not that the victim should bear the punishment due to the offerer's sin as his substitute, but rather that it should be a token of his willingness to offer himself, or that the purity of the offering may somehow be communicated to him. In the case of the eucharist then, the purpose must be that the life of Christ who died for us may be communicated to us, in order that we may offer ourselves with him. God asks for the self-sacrifice of each individual, but for sinful man that is only possible as he is united with Christ's sacrifice; and the sacrifice which man makes is made, as it were, by Christ within him.

Christ's sacrifice is eternal. That is, it is not limited to his death on Calvary. While for man death is an essential part of his sacrifice that need not be so if we are thinking of Christ's heavenly self-offering. Calvary shows what that eternal self-offering must mean in earthly terms. "The Eucharist then is truly a sacrifice. For it is the perpetual externalisation in human ritual of the self-offering of Christ, which was once for all in fact externalised on Calvary, but is ever real in the inward and heavenly sphere." (ibid p 198). However, it is clear that, speaking strictly historically, Christ's human death is past. We can only remember it. Yet men cannot complete their sacrifice apart from being incorporated into his life, and having that life communicated to them. And that life includes his human death. "Thus it is fitting and necessary that part of the Eucharistic action should be held to represent the dying of the Lord on earth; for although, when we speak

strictly in terms of space and time, that which takes place in the Eucharist is only a memorial in relation to the death of Christ, its purpose is to renew in us now by means of His life the spirit and power in which He died." (ibid p 200).

Quick does not, however, want to go beyond representation to the post-Tridentine idea of a real immolation of Christ, though without an actual death, in the Eucharist. He accepts the underlying idea that no earthly offering can enter heaven without some radical change, but considers the point is adequately covered by the idea of expressive representation. His chief objection to traditional Roman teaching on the Mass, as distinct from the more careful statements of Thomas Acquinas, is that it overstresses the vicarious element of the work of Christ until it becomes substitutionary.

Turning to the nature of Christ's presence in the eucharist he runs through the four traditional approaches. Transubstantiation and consubstantiation both relate the presence to the consecration and find it in some connection with the elements; receptionism affirms the presence in the heart of the faithful worshipper; and virtualism, mediating between the two, finds the presence in the use of the elements in a certain action. He points out that in the twentieth century it is no longer possible to think of material objects as having a substantial reality distinct from their accidents, or to think of the body of Christ actually situated in heaven, so that he cannot be both there and in the elements. As we have noted several times Quick is not keen to limit God's presence at all. As far as he is concerned "... whatever is the organ of Christ's activity is, so far, His body." (ibid p 208f). In view of these considerations the traditional arguments about the mode of Christ's presence have lost a good deal of their point.

His own position is very close to virtualism. Interestingly he spends some time criticising the restatement of this position made by W. Spens in 'Essays Catholic and Critical'. Spens uses the analogy of coinage. Coins are given a value by the decision of the sovereign. That value is not dependent on the intrinsic worth of the metal of which the coins are made. It depends rather on the decision of the

sovereign and is manifested in the usage of the coins. Transferring this to the eucharist Spens argued that the eucharistic elements are given their value by God and that this does not change their natural properties, but it changes their value in use.

Quick criticises Spens' argument, not so much because it is wrong, but because it is insufficient. The reality of Christ's presence is not given proper weight. In his own terms this remains a symbolic interpretation, not paying sufficient attention to the instrumental aspect. It remains to some extent dependent on our accepting the meaning given to the symbols. In response to it Quick gives his most explicit affirmation of the instrumental view. "From the beginning a sacrament is in principle something more than a sign of any kind, more even than an effectual sign, if by that term we denote something which can only be effectual as a sign, or which is wholly dependent upon its significance for its effect. A sacrament is actually an instrument whereby God's power operates upon us, not solely through the medium of a meaning apprehended by our minds." (ibid p 219). Thus he moves on to his own view.

He wants to assert the reality of Christ's presence in the elements in a way which will not deny his presence elsewhere, nor depend on the attitude or spiritual state of the recipient. He thinks he can do this by holding the doctrine of Christ's presence in the closest possible connexion with the doctrine of his self-offering which we have just outlined. As we saw that self-offering proceeds continually and men are summoned to participate in it. The Eucharist is, as it were, the manward point of an action by which Christ reaches out to men and, through the church and particularly the eucharist, seeks to incorporate them in his own eternal self-offering. Quick outlines this view in a key passage which I shall quote at length.

"The Eucharist is the self-offering of Christ as externalised in human ritual, so that human lives may be incorporated into its living reality through communion with Him Who offers and is offered. The action of every Eucharist begins in the inward and eternal sphere where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Christ's action then reaches its first stage of externalisation in His body the Church,

which at a given place and time in the person of its priest solemnly offers the bread and wine in memorial of His passion. The action is thus further externalised and extended into the consecrated bread and wine themselves as representing the offered body of Christ's manhood. From this furthest or lowest point of externalisation the action of the living Christ returns back and upwards into the members of His Body the Church as they receive Him in communion. In them it brings forth the spiritual fruits of their own self-offering which raises them towards heaven in Christ's power. So the Eucharistic action returns in the end to heaven which was its source. Thus interpreted, it consists of a double movement, first downward and outward, then upward and inward. Thus it re-embodies in ritual and fulfils through the life of the Church that which was first and perfectly embodied in fact through the historical life of Jesus Christ. At every point of the Eucharistic action the whole Christ is present in that through which He acts; and that through which He acts is at every point His Body as the instrument and expression of His will." (ibid p 223f).

It follows from this that Christ is really present in the elements. Quick accepts this but claims that the presence is only affirmed in the context of the entire action. Christ is not localised in the elements as he is in the doctrine of Transubstantiation. Rather he is identified with them in so far as they are the matter of the action in which he externalises his self-offering to the father, and imparts the power of his sacrificed life to men. Behind this lies Quick's stress on God's continued immanence in, or inspiration of, all creation. The eucharist thus becomes a unique illustration of the idea of representation which for him underlies all sacraments. The divine immanence is focussed there.

The long quotation above shows the importance of the church in Quick's thinking. It is not something he argues about, it is simply asserted. The church links the two ideas of the unique incarnation of the Logos in Jesus and what might be called its more diffuse incarnation, which is adumbrated though not yet perfectly realised, in the whole created universe. The church is the extension both of the incarnation and the atonement. As a human society it must both

permeate the whole of humanity, and offer itself to God on behalf of humanity.

His discussion of the church is perhaps the least helpful and most 'dated' aspect of Quick's work. Both in '<u>The Christian Sacraments</u>' and '<u>Doctrines of the Creed</u>' the discussion turns upon the question of the validity of orders and thus, in his view, the efficacy of sacraments. It is thus largely a 'Catholic' discussion and has a view to prospects of re-union as they appeared at the time. His understanding of more 'Reformed' attitudes is, to say the least, limited. Nevertheless, within its limits it is an important section of his work, particularly for its bearing on sacraments.

He traces divisions within the church to different ideas of the validity of a sacrament which appeared early in the church's history. For the Catholic there are two starting points. There is the Cyprianic view, that a sacrament obtains its validity from the church in which it is performed; outside this one church all sacraments being invalid. On the other hand there is the Augustinian view that the sacrament gets its validity from the 'intention' of the one who performs it, and the use of the correct form and matter. Thus a sacrament is valid if the one performing it intends to 'do what the church does'. The essentially 'Catholic' nature of Quick's thinking appears here almost by accident. Though Augustine, if pressed, would allow lay baptism, he expected sacraments to be performed by one who at least claimed 'orders'. He was in fact involved in a controversy on the question of 'orders'. Quick assumes that this is the real crux of the problem when he goes on to suggest that Anglo-Catholics are forced by circumstances into an Augustinian position of claiming that valid sacraments make a valid church. The point is that these sacraments are made valid by the fact that they are performed by one who is validly ordained. This is clearly the point at issue when he says that Anglo-Catholics accept that Free-Churchmen are able to baptise, and that baptised Free-Churchmen are members of the church, but for them "... those sacraments which require a validly ordained minister for their validity are lacking in the Free Churches; and therefore, if the Free Churches are to be recognised as parts of the 'visible' Church and so to enter into communion with the Church of England, the first necessity is that their

Orders should be validated through the historic episcopacy." (ibid p 138). However, Free-churchmen, as he notes, do not work with the concept of 'validity' as distinct from spiritual efficacy. Given that their sacraments are spiritually effective, which few Anglo-Catholics, I think, would deny, they fail to see how or why their orders should be called into question.

In his own discussion of the problem Quick does not look beyond the question of 'orders'. He suggests that two elements need to be considered, a spiritual power bestowed by God, and authority or authorisation from the church. Clearly one may exist without the other. A false stress on the Augustinian approach has led to confusion and the possibility of 'hole in corner' ordinations by bishops apparently cut off from the church. This misconceives or under-values the aspect of authorisation, and he is quite clear that it would be wrong to value a priesthood arrived at in this way above the solemn authorisation of a minister by, say, one of the historic Calvinist assemblies which does not have the historic episcopate. He suggests that a possible solution would be to regard all churches as in some sense in schism, and thus all ministries as in some sense defective. Hence he looks forward to some mutual recognition and re-authorisation, a path which has in fact been followed.

It is an interesting discussion, and he is keen to be fair to those who take a different point of view from his own over this issue. However he seems quite unable to take seriously the fact that some would not want even to begin this sort of discussion since the whole question would be meaningless to them. He knows, of course, of the existence of such people. He tries to enclose them in his own categories by suggesting that they regard the church as a 'natural sacrament', or he speaks of their 'spiritual' view of the church and ministry, - apparently using the word spiritual in a way which leaves out order. One cannot help thinking that some acquaintance with the fourth book of Calvin's Institutes would have given a different tone to these comments.

Strangely he has no reference to the work of atonement being passed on through scripture or preaching, and seems temperamentally

averse to any treatment of the conversion experience, though many passages in his work show great religious feeling. It is as if the very depth of his appreciation of the church at worship in the eucharist has prevented him from taking the work of evangelism with the same seriousness. Though he quite frequently speaks of the need for the church to be involved with the world, he does not analyse what he means by this or suggest how it might be done.

We should now be able to gather together the main strengths and weaknesses of his position, which have already been mentioned.

The great step forward in Quick's theology, its most important characteristic, is its sense of completeness. Whereas some thinkers, Denney is perhaps a notable example, give the impression of great strength through the persistent advocacy of one key idea, he offers a wider view. There seems to be a greater effort at consistency over the whole field of theology, as is perhaps to be expected from one who expounds the creed. In this sense it is possible to speak of him as a visionary theologian, glimpsing a rational wholeness in God's purposes with his creation. This vision is based, as we have seen, on the twin pillars of the Christian community at worship, and the underlying idea of the purpose of God which is to be worked out through the universe and not simply with individuals. He wrote at a time when the doctrine of the church was moving towards the centre of theological study, at least in England. He also wrote from a background to which such a theme was congenial and to which thinking about the church meant thinking about sacramental worship. The stress on wholeness and purpose was not so common, coming presumably from earlier Hegelianism, and it is the blend of the two which is remarkable.

As far as the doctrine of atonement is concerned it is a step forward that he should have set it in an eschatological framework. It is thus not presented merely as a kind of juggling with sin. It is also a very good point that he should not limit his thinking to what God has done <u>for</u> us in an objective way, but should go on to speak of the work of Christ <u>in</u> us. This can at times add a dimension of religious warmth to his writing. Perhaps more important is the

fact that he makes more use of Biblical thinking and Biblical categories than many of his contemporaries. Though he sometimes seems to feel an almost prophetic compulsion to speak against a narrow Biblicism and what he takes to be 'Barthianism', he also seems to take account of the current revival of Biblical study. This is seen most clearly in his use of the latest Biblical thinking on the meaning of sacrifice. It is also apparent in his appreciation of the eschatological motif in Pauline thinking, in his refusal to affirm a universalist position though it would fit more neatly into his system, and in his use of the distinction between Hebraic and Hellenistic thinking.

Yet this also illustrates what may be his chief weakness. One must always speak of Quick using Biblical categories. He brings them in to his system rather than being ruled by them. It seems that the rational system must have priority and other things fit into it. That is not to say that he has simply devised a system without reference to the Bible, or that the Biblical categories are necessarily abused. The relationship between the philosopher and the theologian in Quick is much more complex than that. There has doubtless been considerable adaption on both sides, but it is generally the philosopher who calls the tune.

The most obvious illustration of this is in his fondness for analysis. We have noted on several occasions how his over subtle analysis has led him to force distinctions, which may well have been useful in themselves, to a point where he is forced to make an unreal choice. It is true that he normally moves on to a synthesis, but one wonders whether the elements which he is putting into the synthesis are really the ones with which he began, or whether they have suffered a change during the preceding analysis.

Underlying this is what might be considered to be a false attitude to history. This seems an odd criticism when one recalls that he insists on the uniqueness of the incarnation; that he agrees with the Liberal Protestants against the Modernists that Christianity must always be subject to an appeal to its historical origins; and that he always stresses the dominance of the Hebraic over the

Hellenistic approach. Yet the criticism must stand since Quick seems to have reduced history itself to a philosophical theme. Appeal to history has become one strand in his system. Actual history, untidily made up of single events which neither fully support nor completely contradict each other; patchy and full of oddities, is a different matter. Making this point about 'The Christian Sacraments', Sir Edwyn Hoskyns wrote, "Taken as a whole Canon Quick has given us a very delicate interweaving of thought and expression, but it suffers from an almost complete lack of a real sense for history. The materials which meet us both in the N.T. and in the world of religious experience are rougher and more awkward than Canon Quick's philosophy allows, and he definitely obscures this roughness. He works with symbols which are almost mathematical in their symmetry, and his conclusions are so neat that the reader is hardly conscious of the drastic simplifications which this neatness involves." (J.T.S. Vol XXX p 88).

There are two great examples of what Hoskyns means in the outline of Quick's work which we have given. The one to which Hoskyns draws attention is the refusal to consider the historical incidents in the Upper Room at the Last Supper. As we saw Quick prefers to go on to speak of the continuing religious significance of the eucharist. No doubt this significance is also of importance, but there is a danger of substituting religious assertions for theological arguments. That is as true of high flown philosophical rhetoric about the eucharist, as of simple evangelistic piety where it is perhaps more easily recognisable. Quick seems to fall into this error in his exposition of the eucharist. In his criticism of the various traditional approaches he makes quite a lot of the argument that since we can no longer regard the body of Christ as occupying space in heaven a lot of discussions which once seemed meaningful must now be abandoned. Yet his own statement of the case is solidly based on the notion of heaven and movements from and to it. It may be that such metaphorical language is inevitable. However it might have been made clear that this highly complex talk of externalising what is always true of God, this intersecting of eternal and temporal spheres which it involves, and this speculation regarding the eternal relationships of the persons of the Trinity, can only be the language of devotion. It should not replace, or take precedence over, the attempt to examine the historical material and to determine

as far as possible from that what happened and what was intended.

Secondly, on the question of atonement, Quick has been highly selective in his use of Biblical material. His view of sacrifice is not unquestioned. But it is possible to accept what he writes on the sacrificial view and still to ask what he makes of the other material. He speaks of including the language of the other views in his statement of the sacrificial theory, but that is hardly enough. As he has shown himself the language he incorporates is from later formulations of the theories. The fact remains that Paul does use substitutionary language and ideas, and that that view has more support in the New Testament generally than the sacrificial one, certainly in the form in which Quick has given it. Furthermore the uniting of the two views in a predominantly substitutionary way is found in the New Testament (cp I Peter 1:19ff). It is not enought simply to note these other lines and then leave them while pursuing more attractive or congenial ones. It may be that it would be better to give up the neatness of the system. Similarly he is selective in his treatment of sin. It is true that, as he explains it, the priestly approach seems able to deal with the idea of the taint of sin which the prophetic tradition cannot handle so well. But there is also the question of actual sins. Having drawn attention to the distinction between vitium and reatus Quick tends to concentrate exclusively on the former. Actual deliberate sinning and the guilt it brings is much less prominent in his work.

At base of course he may be showing the characteristics of the Catholic as opposed to the Reformed approach. Certainly he seems temperamentally unable to come to terms with a more Reformed, Calvinist, position. This is shown in his few, and rather casual, references to conversion. We do not find in Quick the Reformed feeling for the awful personal holiness of God and the sense of being individually set against him. Personality, like history, has become a philosophical concept, part of a system. His conception of God seems to fall short of the majesty and lonely grandeur typical of the Reformed tradition. Thus for the individual there is at best the prospect of being reconciled to the over-riding purpose, but never the glad release of the lonely sinner who knows that his own guilt has

been removed and that he personally can come to God as a child to its father.

Such criticisms should not detract from the real value of Quick's work, and particularly the service he rendered to modern thinking on the doctrine of atonement by re-introducing the eschatological element. Writing of medieval theology he noted that it "... lacked ... the notion of the Church with all its members as a whole community living in the world yet not of it. ... not only the society which suffers with the Crucified but also the Society which in its own life anticipates the new heaven and the new earth of the world to come." (The Gospel of the New World p 78). In so far as he reminded the church of his own day of such themes, and called attention in thinking about the atonement away from a false individualism, then his work has great value.

VII DONALD BAILLIE (1887-1954)

Passing from the work of Quick to that of his close contemporary D.M. Baillie one almost enters another world theologically. Many of the same themes are still present, indeed in the treatment of the eucharist there is a marked similarity and Baillie refers to Quick with appreciation, but over all there is a difference of mood. Not only does Baillie write from a different ecclesiastical and theological background, but he is subject to different influences and faced with different problems. This is at least partly due to his apparently greater openness to continental theology which is barely mentioned by Quick. The result is that whereas Quick would be described as a transitional figure, affirming orthodoxy in a period of change, Baillie appears as a mediating figure, holding together the best of different positions separated both by time and theological conviction. In his writings we find reflected most of the best theological thought of the century up to his death.

In view of his wide influence and the frequency with which he is quoted his actual literary output was remarkably small. This is largely due to the fact that he served for sixteen years in three parishes before entering academic life as Professor of Systematic Theology at the University of St. Andrew's in 1934. Then, during the twenty years which he held that chair, a good deal of his time and energy was given to the ecumenical movement. It may be too that he was not keen to hurry in to print. There appear to have been a number of series of lectures and other writings worthy of publication which were not published or were published posthumously. During his life time he only published two major works: his Kerr Lectures '<u>Faith in God, and its Christian Consummation</u>' (1927), which was an essay in the philosophy of religion, and his important work on the incarnation and atonement '<u>God was in Christ</u>' (1948), as well as a few articles and reviews. An appendix to '<u>God was in Christ</u>' was the last thing he wrote before his death in 1954. After his death a series of lectures given in 1952, together with some other papers, were published as '<u>The Theology of the Sacraments</u>' (1957), and there were a number of books of sermons and occasional addresses.

His early work develops from Liberal Protestantism and the influence of that tradition is always with him. The appeal to the example of the 'Jesus of History' and to the religious a priori in every man is particularly marked in 'Faith in God', and is never really dropped. By the time of 'God was in Christ' he has been influenced by the rise of neo-orthodoxy with its stress on the 'Word of God' addressing man in an 'I-Thou' encounter of judgement and grace. Now there is a far greater stress on the uniqueness of Jesus and the importance of his work. Yet there is no uncritical acceptance of the new modes of thinking. He remains appreciative of the 'Jesus of History' school of thought, and stresses the value of objective historical revelation. Thus he mediates between the early Liberalism and neo-orthodoxy, and also between those who wish to stress the subjective and those who wish to stress the objective aspects of faith. His work shows a development of mind rather than any radical change, and he perhaps becomes a good example of what Stephen Neil was to describe as a 'post-Barthian Liberal'.

It could be argued that the whole of his work is concerned with the subject of grace, though in the first book the word is not often used. Nevertheless he is concerned throughout with the relation between God and man. It is in introducing his work on sacraments that he gives his definition, "To the New Testament witness, and above all to St. Paul, grace was simply the free forgiving love and mercy of God." He regrets that for long periods in church history this conception was replaced by a quasi-material one, and is pleased that "... in the twentieth century there has been a notable development of the conception of grace as what Oman called 'a gracious personal relationship', to be thought of on the analogy of the influence of a father upon his child." (The Theology of the Sacraments p 52).

We may give at once a broad outline of the presence of this influence in his thought, noting that it is very similar to what we have already seen in Oman. He sees it as present, or recognised, in different ways or in varying degrees throughout God's creation. The degree, or variation, depends on the 'person-ness' of that in which it is present, and according to the receptivity or resistance of sinful man. The figure of concentric circles may make this clearer.

On the outer circle he clearly takes account of something which may be called grace throughout the material creation. He does not dwell on this idea, but he can later speak of a sacramental universe. Moving inwards, he argues that all men have some experience of the approach of God towards them - chiefly in their sense of moral conviction. It is the part of the theologian and the church to bring men to see this for themselves. Further inwards is the circle of believers who accept and co-operate with the grace of God and live in dependence on it so that it matures into full Christian faith. We shall see that as his thought developed he saw complications in this movement from morality to faith which do not appear to have concerned him too greatly in his earlier work. Finally, at the centre of the circles, is the person of Jesus in whom the total victory of the grace of God is traditionally expressed in terms of the hypostatic union. Again as his thought develops there is a move from stressing Jesus example and similarity to men to stressing his uniqueness.

Starting from the human side he begins from the fact that faith exists. There is a tradition of faith, the concept of "... a mental attitude, a peculiar kind of knowledge or conviction or apprehension or resolution, which brings us into touch with truth and with Deity, and which is at the very heart of religion." (Faith in God p 37). In considering various approaches to this fact of faith Baillie is concerned to establish three things: that this conviction of faith cannot be so explained that it is explained away, that it is seminally present in all men, and, most important, that there is in it an objective element which is traditionally described as the approach of God. It would not be enough to establish any one of these elements the three are interwoven.

Faith cannot be reduced to custom or reason, though both custom and reason have their part in the growth of mature faith. He illustrates this by a parable of a simple uneducated charwoman who works in the house of a learned philosopher. Both have faith. It could be argued that the woman's faith is the result of suggestion and the customs of her group, while that of the philosopher is based on reason and logical argument. Such an approach, Baillie suggests, is inadequate. It overlooks both the prior element of personal

insight, and the confidence with which the believer lives on the objectivity of faith.

As he speaks of the charwoman it is easy to believe that he is calling upon years of pastoral experience and observation of firm and simple piety. Acceptance of the ideas and customs of her group would not explain how such a woman could maintain her faith in face of difficulty. Still less does it account for the fact that her faith supports and sustains her when much in her environment may be hostile. "Such a woman has not accepted the tradition blindly, by mere force of her environment. She has appropriated it, she has made it her own, by some inner argument in her heart which has gone to meet it; until she has come to possess a faith superior to her environment, capable of uplifting by its influence the religious lives of her neighbours, and of withstanding the contradictions of her lot." (ibid p 89). And such inner apprehension is, in part, the grasping of something objective outside the individual.

In the case of the philosopher reason may help him to understand his faith, but reason in the sense of logical argument is not the ground of his faith. Baillie points out with copious quotations that all schools of Christianity have agreed that logical argument cannot 'prove' faith, though some have allowed that general truths such as the existence of God can be so proved. For his own part Baillie is happy to accept the fact that theistic or idealistic conclusions are not the result of rational 'proof' but are rather based on prior conviction - that is, on faith. The philosopher, like the charwoman, begins with some 'germ of faith'. Of course it does not follow that faith is irrational. Baillie prefers L.P. Jacks' description of faith as 'reason grown courageous'.

A more common explanation of the basis of faith was religious experience. An appeal to religious experience was a feature of some strands of Liberal Protestantism. The Barthian school protested strongly that Christian faith is not just religious experience. And yet in the way in which some more extreme exponents of 'Barthianism' also opposed faith to rational knowledge, it could be argued that this school of thought was in fact appealing to a unique type of religious

experience. Baillie had considerable sympathy with the approach through experience. He sees that it has a warmth and a possible richness which is preferable to a cool intellectualist approach, and he felt that Brunner and Barth[1] had over-reacted against it. Yet he saw that there were dangers. Experience can be set against reason, thus making faith appear irrational; or it can be made so uniquely personal that it is divorced from the rest of life and so cannot be used in an argument; or it can deliver faith into the hands of the psychologists, there to be discredited as the result of projection or wish-fulfilment.

For Baillie the right appeal to experience, which avoided these dangers, was to hold experience and faith together as in some sense one. Thus he differed from Schleiermacher's approach, as it was currently understood, of arguing that the experience came first and that faith is a rationalising of it. Such an approach could lead to what he considered to be a false comparison between science and theology. As the scientist begins with experience, through his experiments, and then states theories, so, it was argued, the theologian begins with religious experience and then states faith. Such a view implies that religious experience is simply feeling without any cognitive element, thus almost any beliefs could be deduced from it. Against this Baillie asserts that beliefs are implicit in the experience if it is a genuine religious experience, an experience of God, and such beliefs are about objective realities not feelings or moods. "Religious doctrines are not primarily about states of the human mind, but about objective divine realities, God and His ways and His works." (ibid p 114).

Put this way experience is a vital part of faith and there is no religious faith apart from experience. Just as it is wrong to speak of the experience coming first and the belief being built upon, or abstracted from, it, so it is wrong to reverse the order and argue that a belief can be held intellectually first and that experience can add something to it. Without some experience there is no real faith, "... when a man without any living experience of religion

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1 It is noticeable that Baillie always puts the names in this order, and though he refers to the 'Barthian' school quotations are usually from Brunner.

assents 'intellectually', as he thinks, to the truths of religion, it is not really the truths of religion that he has assented to, but certain metaphysical or quasi-metaphysical statements." (ibid p 118). Religious truths can only be apprehended by experience. Dogmas merely symbolise them. The dogmas must be personally appropriated and lived through in experience. Thus religious experience is not so much a basis for faith as the faith itself.

This discussion of religious experience is important for Baillie, both in what he denies and in what he asserts. He is not happy about the existence of some undifferentiated experience of the numinous as a prelude to faith. He brings out strongly, what had been implicit before, that faith must include a cognitive element. On a similar line he denies that the experience is simply subjective. Faith is concerned with objective realities implicit in the experience, not simply with religious states of mind. The experience is an experience of something which 'comes' to us from outside and is personally appropriated. In view of the looseness with which the phrase 'religious experience' can be used, he understood the reaction against it. Yet he does not want to see it as a totally unique experience. He wants to be able to appeal to a more general experience, hence a stress on uniqueness at this point - so that the experience of the believer appears totally different from that of one who does not, or does not yet, believe, - would not be welcome.

The general and fundamental experience to which he appeals is the experience of moral conviction. Here we approach the heart of his theology. It is in the experience of morality that we find the basis of faith, and this is so for the agnostic as much as for the avowedly religious man. He later saw serious complications in the move from morality to faith, nevertheless he does not seem to have withdrawn from the fundamental position adopted in 'Faith in God'.

The argument that there is an intimate connection between morality and religion has often been advanced. Particularly has it been used in the counselling of those who have some doubts about their faith. From the memoir of his brother which John Baillie published with 'The Theology of the Sacraments', it appears that Donald Baillie also came

to it in this way. John Baillie explains that his brother passed through a period of intense intellectual distress during which he was uncertain about the most fundamental aspects of Christianity. He goes on, "He was fond of testifying afterwards to the great help he received in this matter from that greatest of nineteenth-century preachers, who several generations before had passed through so similar an experience, Robertson of Brighton, and especially from his sermon on 'Obedience the Organ of Spiritual Knowledge' ..." (op cit p 20f).

Donald Baillie himself refers to Robertson at length. He is quoted as one among a considerable number of believers at the end of the nineteenth-century and beginning of the twentieth who, when their faith was threatened by rationalism, found bed-rock in moral consciousness. When no intellectual argument seemed to be of use it remained true that men knew a sense of moral obligation, and that in doing what they saw to be laid upon them they both stilled their doubts for a while and found themselves led back to faith. "It was a case of faith being driven back by intellectual difficulties upon its own last defences, and thus discovering what these defences actually are - the certainties of the moral consciousness. These a man could not doubt, in actual life; and these, taken seriously and faithfully, carried with them a religious faith in goodness at the heart of the universe." (Faith in God p 168). For Baillie such an experience, and such an interpretation of it, are theoretically open to all, even the doubter, "... in actual life and practice every doubter worth considering knows that in some quite inescapable sense the noble is better than the base and has an absolute claim upon him." (ibid p 160). This inescapable knowledge he sees as a germ of faith which exists in everyone. This idea was elaborated in John Baillie's distinction between what is denied with the 'top of the head' and affirmed by the 'bottom of the heart'.

This argument is not as simple as it at first seems. The very possibility of a religious a priori in man was currently being severely criticised, as was any idea of God being postulated as the conclusion of an argument. Baillie knew of such criticisms and largely accepted them. But he thought his own position was immune from such attack.

Behind an argument connecting morality and religion is the philosophy of Kant. Baillie acknowledged a debt to Kant, but differed from him. Kant saw that God is not simply deduced on cause and effect lines from the existence of conscience to God who implanted it. But still in Kant God is a postulate, he is not actually met in moral demand. For himself, Baillie sees that conscience is partly the result of evolution and environment, and its development can be traced psychologically. Neither is God brought in as a kind of guarantor that obedience to the categorical imperative of morality will ultimately be conjoined with happiness. His basic point is that we are not here dealing with a two-step argument - first morality then God - but that, properly understood, moral experience is in some sense already an experience of God.

This is an important point in his argument. In our experience of moral demand we have not simply a clue to the way things are, but a direct intuition of the objective reality of the world. We are in contact with something outside ourselves which is undeniable. He makes the point in various ways. "Religious faith is essentially the conviction that our highest values must and do count in the whole scheme of things, that they are not simply our little dream, but reveal the very meaning and purpose of the universe, that love is at the heart of all things;..." (ibid p 175). A little later, "Is it too paradoxical in the modern world to say that faith in God is a very part of our moral consciousness, without which the latter becomes meaningless? ... The conviction 'I ought to do this', if it means anything at all, tells me something, not simply about myself or about the action indicated, but about the very meaning of the universe." (ibid p 182)

Critics of this sort of approach might say that it reduces religion to 'mere morality'. But Baillie would not accept that there is anything 'mere' about morality. In its proper place, at the centre of religion, it is of vital importance. He also argues that his use of the word 'moral' should not be limited to ethical ideas of the good in relation to conduct. It must also include man's response to beauty and truth. Though it must be admitted that his arguments are normally from the realm of conduct, and that he refers

rather slightingly to beauty and truth as 'provincial moralities', he clearly wants to include under moral conviction all response to absolute values.

This response, as we have noted, he sees as a 'germ of faith' and he asserts that such a germ is present in the moral honesty of many who deny faith. Yet to do justice to his position it is important to see that he never refers to it as more than a germ. For the spiritual counsellor it is a point to which to appeal; for the troubled individual it is a place on which to stand; but, on its own, it is not enough for a man's entire religious life. The metaphor must be extended to speak of the flourishing, or blooming, of a mature religious life. "Religion is, indeed, more than morality, and the life of faith is more than the life of ideals. Yet true faith - or the true knowledge of God - can only realise itself in us as we follow these ideals. It is in them, as in a glass darkly, that we can see the God whose presence in us created them for us and inspired us to seek them as the images of Himself." (ibid p 226). Full knowledge of God, even so far as that is possible to man in this life, is not the same as the direct intuition of moral values. But it is not something beside them, it is something which comes through them. The life of moral idealism cannot be content with itself but points beyond itself.

For the purpose of the present study Baillie's use of morality in his early work is important for at least two reasons. In the first place he sees it as an approach to man from God. Like Oman in his use of the 'Supernatural', Baillie passes without much question from asserting the reality of moral conviction to speaking of God. Nevertheless, it is clear that he sees the existence of morality and the possibility of moral conviction as manifestations of God's grace to the world. Secondly, he speaks of the realisation of faith as a gift of God. This is much nearer to traditional language of grace. Speaking of the value in times of doubt of continuing to obey the demands of morality, he makes the point that the assurance of faith which the doubter seeks comes from God, not from a human act of will. "When it comes to a man, though it has arisen out of his 'doing the will' of God, yet somehow it comes as a gift at which the seeker can

only wonder, because he has not wrought it himself, and if he has found it at last, it has also found him." (ibid p 161). Indeed the seeker may never attain to faith in a particularly articulate form, "And if and when he does, it is not altogether as an achievement, but as an 'experience', a revelation, a gift of God which has gradually or suddenly come to him while he 'waited for God' in the path of duty and love." (ibid p 162).

The last two quotations show that Baillie intended to keep the initiative of God in the experience of faith. Yet that initiative is not too prominent in the early work. Furthermore, though a definitely Christian background is assumed, the person of Christ appears rather late in the work. Certainly by the time of 'God was in Christ', twenty-one years later, he has adopted a much more Christocentric position. As he does so there occurs that change in his attitude to morality to which we have already referred.

So far faith has been presented as the conviction of goodness at the heart of the universe. The individual comes to personal insight of this through his apprehension of moral demand which in some sense comes from outside himself and can be seen as the approach of God. Christianity is the highest, because truest, expression of a wider phenomenon; it is the growing to maturity of the 'germ of faith' present in the recognition of moral demand. The maturing process comes from the clearer recognition of the moral demand and greater personal commitment to it.

Yet clearly this is not all that Christianity involves. Baillie seems to want to say more, even in the early book where he does not, at least very clearly, do so. He knows that Christian experience involves more than the obedience of a morally sensitive man, and that, in any case, man does not always choose the highest when he sees it. Christians speak of divine assistance, or grace; they also experience forgiveness for moral failures; and they associate such assistance and forgiveness with Jesus. He thus comes to speak more of grace and less of morality, and, at the same time, develops his Christology.

In 'Faith in God' he gives the impression that in spite of

difficulties man can at least make a good attempt at living up to the moral ideals which he recognises. In any case there is no problem about urging him to do so. Later he was much less happy about this, or at least about its sufficiency. In a series of unpublished lectures delivered in 1947 under the title 'Beyond Morality' his thought shows a distinct and significant development. Though he still stresses the necessary connection between morality and religion he gives far more attention to the need for grace. N.H.G. Robinson comments, "... it is difficult to deny that the centre of gravity in the moral realm has moved for Baillie from the moral endurance of man to the prevenient grace of God." (Theologians of Our Time: Donald Baillie E.T. LXXIV p 359). It is in these lectures that he introduces the idea, which was later to figure in 'God was in Christ', of the 'paradox of moralism'. "Writers on ethics" he comments "have often spoken of 'the paradox of hedonism' - the fact that the quest of happiness defeats itself. But they have not so often noticed what I call 'the paradox of moralism' - the fact that the quest of goodness defeats itself." (God was in Christ p 121n). In fact the moralistic approach tends to lead to Pharisaism.[1] Elsewhere we find him pointing out that the true saints have known themselves to be dependent on the grace of God and have not given too much thought to their own moral effort. Paradoxically it has only been when they were so dependent that they have been 'free' to make any response to the moral ideal. "Instead of concentrating on their own characters, they have been God-centred. They have been less conscious of themselves than of God, less conscious of an ethic or an ideal than of the will of God, the love of God, which called out the response of their faith and love." (Philosophers and Theologians on the Freedom of the Will reprinted from S.J.T. Vol 4 No 2, 1951, in The Theology of the Sacraments pp 127ff p 136. This is one of the lectures 'Beyond Morality' mentioned above).

This development in his thought is seen most clearly in his Christology. Here we see him reflecting the main problems of Christian

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1. Robinson questions this, and asks whether there is not a range of natural morality which would condemn Pharisaism as itself moral failure? cf op cit p 259 n6.

theology in the first half of this century. There seems to be a constraint in his thought leading him to a greater Christological concentration, stressing Jesus' uniqueness and work. Yet the later writings are often developments of earlier insights, and there is always the refusal to reject what is good in earlier positions or to over-stress the uniqueness of Christ or the exclusiveness of Christianity.

The early work presents Jesus chiefly as the 'Supreme Believer'. Given that faith develops from moral insight, he is faced with the question of the significance of the historical Jesus. He sees the problem summed up in Lessing's dictum 'contingent truths of history can never be made the proof of necessary truths of reason' (cited Faith in God p 233). Such criticism, he suggests, has missed the point that Christianity is not concerned with 'truths of reason', but with personal insight. In his own metaphor, what is needed is aid to the development of the 'germ of faith' so that it might blossom into mature religious life.

The development of any individual's religious life is largely dependent on what is presented to him from the past through past exponents of the tradition of faith. Even then the basic insight is not reduceable to words. To reduce religion to words is not only to impoverish it but to lead to contradictions and confusion. The reality must be experienced by the individual for himself, and for this the only adequate vehicle is personality. Through the personalities of believers, individuals or groups, the experience of faith can be passed on. This is the great strength of a book like the Psalter, which "... not only transmits in words the truths which its writers discovered or believed: it brings us into contact with the very hearts of those believing men in ancient Israel - with the warm and beating heart of faith itself." (ibid p 236).

It is here in the succession of believers, again remarkably like Oman, that he places Jesus, and incidentally adumbrates the Christology which he was to work out in 'God was in Christ'. In Jesus, human faith - and Baillie stresses that it was human faith - is raised to such a pitch that there met in Him two processes, the process of God's

willingness to reveal himself and the process of mankind's search for God. Thus Baillie writes, "Now, if there should ever in the course of history arise a Supreme Believer, he would, of course, at the same time be a supreme discoverer of divine reality, and his discovery would be to other men a supreme example of the 'revelation' which, as we saw, they so much need." (ibid p 237). And later, "... a life of perfect human faith, being indeed a perfect realisation of divine values in human conditions would be a perfect revelation of God to man. It would be a presentation to us of God as He really is, or at least as far as the human soul in this earthly life can ever know Him at all. ... it would 'show us the Father'. It would be not simply a perfect faith in God for our imitation, but at the same time, and ipso facto, a perfect revelation of faith's Object ..." (ibid p 240). This revelation, coming through the personality of Jesus, could not be separated from Him. It was passed to Jesus' contemporaries by His personality, and to succeeding generations by the 'story' of His personality.

Baillie later strengthened this position, but, before proceeding with his development, it is worth noting certain inadequacies, or perhaps illogicalities, here. In traditional orthodox terms the most perfect life available for the Christian is the life of the saints in heaven. That presumably would be as near as man can get to being a 'supreme believer' or 'supreme discoverer', there one might expect to find 'perfect faith' or 'perfect realisation of divine values in human conditions'. And yet it has not been part of orthodox thought to see that heavenly life of the believer as 'a perfect revelation of God in man'. It is difficult, therefore, to see why that approximation to that heavenly life possible on earth should ever become 'a perfect revelation of faith's Object'. What is missing here is some stress on what might be called the God-ward side of the incarnation, or the divine initiative. Later I shall suggest that this weakness persists in Baillie's Christology.

In his later work Baillie saw weaknesses in his early statement of the case, but he did not abandon it, he rather strengthened it. He argued then that while the sacred story with Jesus at the centre remains the essential expression of the Christian view of history,

"... it is not simply a story of human seeking and finding, of spiritual progress and discovery, with Jesus as the climax. That is a true story from its own point of view ... (but it is also) ... a story with a 'plot'. God's eternal plan which 'was made flesh' in Jesus Christ." (God was in Christ p 78). This raises the problem of the believer's relation to the historical critic.

Baillie is certain that we cannot entirely reject the history and keep Christ as a symbol or myth. In certain areas it is possible to speak of 'myth' in expressing Christian faith, but statements about the life of Jesus are not of this sort. He notes with approval that even Bultmann insists on the concrete historical fact of God's incursion into human history in the person of Jesus of Nazareth and his death in the cross.[1] Clearly this must mean that the central fact of Christianity is to some extent open to historical criticism. However this does not leave the simple believer at the mercy of the historical critic. In 1927 he was pointing out that the facts of history cannot be approached without any presuppositions. Ideally there is some 'sympathy' between the historian and his subject matter, he cannot approach it coldly. So, in the case of Jesus, how much of his personality 'comes across' depends on the approach. The earnest seeker "... has a kind of insight that penetrates directly to that historical Figure, and makes him virtually independent of all historians as regards the central fact." (Faith in God p 248). Indeed to some extent faith is the basis of the historical judgement rather than being determined by it.

Later he developed this line of thought pointing out that the interpretation of history demanded a vantage point. The Christian has such a vantage point in his view of Christ and the significance of his story. In the ancient world Christianity was able to give meaning to history by its insistence on this 'story' in which the Divine had come into history, and so it rose above cyclic views of history. Similarly, in the modern world the believer is able to rise above purely humanistic and evolutionary views of progress. "It is not only that history remains a vast undifferentiated chaos of non-

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1. cf 'God was in Christ' p 319f.

significant detail unless we approach it with some principle of selection, some interest, some questions to ask, and therefore some 'values' to dictate the questions. There is also the further perception that history has no ultimate meaning, no pattern or direction - that indeed the human race on earth has no history in the true sense at all - unless some temporal point or points in it can be found to possess absolute significance in the prophetic or 'eschatological' sense; unless an absolute time-scheme a Heilsgeschichte, a 'sacred history' can be perceived in it by faith." (God was in Christ p 73f).

But, in the light of more modern theology, there remains a further question. Given that historic fact is vital for Christianity, how much actual history is needed and how are we dependent on it? Here we have to do both with the reaction against the simple 'Jesus of History' movement; and also with the complementary insistence that Christianity is not primarily concerned with history as a succession of facts (Historie), but with 'salvation history', that is with a particular strand of history which, with its interpretation, becomes a feature of the present for the hearer (Geschichte). Thus it is the present 'impact' of the kerygma that is of prime importance, not the historical reliability of the documents.

Perhaps Baillie is nearer to the latter position than he is willing to admit. His treatment of historical criticism could point in that direction. The argument which we have just outlined seems in fact to be circular. The believer approaches the historical material which has brought him the Gospel in the confidence of the Gospel which the material has brought. The faith and understanding of Christ which he now has becomes the vantage point of his historical criticism. But such faith and understanding arises from his present 'existential' relationship with the tradition of 'salvation-history'. Further, the lectures 'Beyond Morality' present a much more explicit and enthusiastic commendation of the existential approach than appears in his published works. That such an understanding of Baillie is possible is shown in Bultmann's comment on 'God was in Christ', "In this interpretation, which in my terminology I like to call 'existential', I feel myself deeply at one with him, and have found

it richly rewarding." (From a letter written after Baillie's death quoted in '<u>Theology of the Sacraments</u>' p 35).

However it is clear that Baillie did not want to go too far in that direction. However important it may be that the believer has <u>now</u> an existential experience of the Gospel, it is also important to keep the fact that this is an experience of the Jesus who <u>then</u> lived in Nazareth. This is an important element in the Gospel of the grace of God by which man is saved. Baillie is far from happy about the reaction against the Jesus of History movement.

It is not that he is unwilling to see faults and limitations in some presentations of it. He is willing, for instance, to see that many re-constructions of the Jesus of History were naive, and failed to do justice to his spiritual stature. Further, he is aware that in the work of some Liberal Protestants a sentimental attachment to the personality of Jesus became a substitute for the revelation of God. Yet such criticisms are not enough to condemn the attempt to find the historical Jesus, nor do they detract from the importance of what is then found. Indeed the fault was that some exponents of the movement had not done their work well enough. Had they done so they would have found not only that the real Jesus was a greater figure than they allowed, but also that his own teaching discouraged a 'Jesus-cult', that he pointed to the Father who 'sent' him, and that he gave no support to the idea that to deal with himself was somehow an easier option than to deal with the father.

There were other criticisms of the movement with which Baillie did not agree, or which he thought were too extreme. Thus he cannot agree that the New Testament has no biographical interest in the person of Jesus. There is, it is true, little encouragement for the humanistic interest in the development of personality, but there is a strand of New Testament teaching which presents Jesus as the great example of Christian living. Certainly in the work of Luke there seems to be a biographical interest, and it is hard to see how this could be avoided in a faith which sets such store by particular historical events.

More important are the positive benefits which the movement gained for theology when sympathetically understood. Baillie stresses two points of great importance. First he points out that the 'Jesus of History' means not just a concentration on the things Jesus of Nazareth said and did during his earthly life, it also refers to his 'human-ness'. Those who contrast faith and history normally take references to the 'Jesus of History' to mean an attempt to provide a kind of photograph. Not only would that be difficult, but it would be poor history for it would leave the 'depths' of his person out of account, and these are the features most important for faith. Setting aside for a moment the question of how one is to reach those 'depths' anyway, Baillie can justly argue that the humanity of Jesus is of vital importance for orthodox faith. In their reaction against a false liberalism, and their impatience with the attempt to get accurate biographical details, some theologians, he particularly refers to Brunner and Barth, put undue stress on the Deity of Jesus. The 'theology of the Word' is not always sufficiently a theology of 'the Word made flesh'. In making this point Baillie is simply defending his earlier stress on the human faith of Jesus.

Secondly the 'Jesus of History' movement drew attention to the importance of revelation in the work of atonement. Baillie disagrees strongly with Kierkegaard's suggestion that, "If the contemporary generation had left behind them nothing but the words, 'we believe that in such and such a year God appeared among us in the humble figure of a servant, that He lived and taught in our community, and finally died', it would be more than enough." (Kierkegaard: Philosophical Fragments pp 51ff and 87, cited God was in Christ p 49). In the same vein he criticises Bultmann for limiting his interest in the historical revelation to the one great event of the cross, and making little of the historical figure of Jesus. While it is true that Jesus came to 'do' something and not just to 'show' something, it is wrong to set the two in too great an antithesis. Salvation is at least partly by illumination, "... God saves us by revealing Himself to us, enlightening our minds with the knowledge of Himself, not in a 'Gnostic' sense, but by that method which was so intolerable and incredible to the Gnostics, the way of Incarnation in a real human life." (ibid p 49). To concentrate on the cross alone is

artificial, "Surely the saving work of Christ is not confined to what happened at the end of His life, but extends back over the whole of His life, and we cannot understand the meaning of His death unless we remember whose death it was, not only in an 'eschatological' but in a purely historical sense." (ibid p 220).

Some veiling remains. The 'Jesus of History' cannot be used as a 'proof'. Man is still dependent on revelation in the sense of the internal witness of the Holy Spirit. Yet this is a witness to the Jesus whose life and personality can, at least to some extent, be found by the methods of the 'Jesus of History' school. Certainly the rediscovery of the historical Jesus brought comfort to many in a critical age, and breathed life into the dogmas. "And I cannot believe that this rediscovery, coming in the time of need as a veritable revelation with a rejuvenating power, was from the Christian point of view a delusion, or was anything less than a recovery of something which is vital to Christian faith." (ibid p 52f).

Such a defence of the importance of the 'Jesus of History', and such a positive estimate of the contribution of Liberal Protestantism were uncommon in 1948. But Baillie knew that he could not stop there. Even to speak of Jesus as revealing God was to go much further than to speak of Him as the Supreme Believer, for it involves a judgement of his person; and the Gospel speaks of the action of God as well as the revelation of God. It is necessary therefore to go on to Christology and the doctrine of Atonement. "A true Christology" writes Baillie, "will tell us not simply that God is like Christ, but that God was in Christ. Thus it will tell us not only about the nature of God, but about His activity, about what He has done, coming the whole way for our salvation in Jesus Christ; and there is no other way in which the Christian truth about God can be expressed." (ibid p 66f. his italics).

Though the present study is not primarily concerned with Christology, it will be necessary to look at Baillie's thought on this subject because it is so closely bound with his teaching on grace.

He begins by ruling out various over-simplifications, such as that Jesus was really God all the time and not really a man at all, or that he was an intermediate being, or that he was a man who became God. To do justice to all the evidence Christian orthodoxy insists that he was God and man. Can we go any further?

However much one may insist on saying 'God and man', it seems that the human mind must begin from one or the other. We can begin from God and work down, or we can begin from man and work up. In reaction against the 'Jesus of History' movement much current theology, and again Baillie refers particularly to Brunner and Barth, tended to begin from God. But, as we have seen, Baillie was much more kindly disposed towards the 'Jesus of History' movement. He had in any case already committed himself in 'Faith in God' to begin from the human picture of Jesus as the 'Supreme Believer'. And here we may note that whatever appreciative comments he made about later theology, and however much genuine development there may have been in his thought, this early work sets the pattern for his thinking. The use of the 'paradox of Grace', which is the chief feature of 'God was in Christ', is the working out and defending in face of new theological circumstances of what had been implicit twenty years earlier. Furthermore, not only had he committed himself to the human starting point, he had also committed himself to working with moral rather than ontological categories. These presuppositions seem to govern his approach to the modern Christological theories which he discusses in 'God was in Christ'.

Thus he rejects modern attempts to use the concept of 'anhypostasia' because he thinks it does not do justice to the humanity of Jesus, and rejects Kenoticism because of its commitment to ontological categories. In passing one might note that in constantly referring to 'anhypostasia' as 'impersonal humanity' - though he admits this might not be the correct meaning - he may not be doing justice to either the ancient or the modern exponents of this view. Much of what would now be meant by 'personality' would be included not in 'hypostasis' but in 'phusis', in terms of the classical debates. It appears that what the humanity of Jesus lacked, according to this view, is not 'personality' but 'concrete

existence' until its possibility of such existence was appropriated by the Divine Word. It seems that the theory is used in this sense by Barth. Similarly, though in raising the stock criticisms of Kenoticism he shows the serious difficulties which that view must face, it is noticeable that he does not consider the possibilities of moralising the ontological categories, or interpreting them in some psychological way, as explored by Forsyth and Weston.

The other suggestion he considers, rather strangely it seems to me, is Heim's use of the category of 'Leadership'. Here Jesus is presented as the great 'Leader' who enters into 'I-Thou' relations with each of his followers through the Holy Spirit and demands their complete obedience. In fact Heim does not seem to deal with the traditional problems of Christology, and perhaps Baillie's reason for looking at this theory at all is that it does stress the human Jesus. It also gives Baillie the opportunity to point out that Jesus did not demand blind obedience, as the 'Leader' in Heim's model does, but attempted to lead men to personal insight of the truth. As we have seen this is a theme dear to Baillie.

As he admits the discussion of other views has only been a clearing of the ground preparatory to putting his own, based on the 'paradox of grace'. There is, he suggests, an analogy between the paradox which the Christian knows in himself in the experience of grace, and the relation of God and man in Jesus. "Its essence lies in the conviction which a Christian man possesses, that every good thing in him, every good thing he does, is somehow not wrought by himself but by God. This is a highly paradoxical conviction, for in ascribing all to God it does not abrogate human personality nor disclaim personal responsibility. Never is human action more truly and fully personal, never does the agent feel more perfectly free, than in those moments of which he can say as a Christian that whatever good was in them was not his but God's." Here he argues may be "... a clue to the understanding of that perfect life in which the paradox is complete and absolute, that life of Jesus which, being the perfection of humanity, is also, and even in a deeper and prior sense, the very life of God Himself. If the paradox is a reality in our poor imperfect lives at all, so far as there is any good in them,

does not the same or a similar paradox, taken at the perfect and absolute pitch, appear as the mystery of the Incarnation?" (ibid pp 114, 117). He supports this suggestion by reference to the existence of paradox over wide areas of Christian thought and experience, and particularly refers to the belief in providence and the doctrine of God's creation out of nothing.

Some idea of paradox seems inherent in Christian theology. If one allows that God created all and gave, or gives, it an independence over against himself, there is always the question of the co-responsibility of God and man. The idea of paradox has been particularly influential in twentieth century theology. However, the word can have several meanings or shades of meaning, which may occasionally merge into each other. In writing about the mysteries of religious life such merging may not be too important, but it might be misleading if the idea is to be used as the basis for important theological constructions.

Strangely, at the point where he comes nearest to giving a definition, Baillie puts together antinomy, dialectical contradiction, and paradox. He then quotes Sergius Bulgakov, "An antinomy simultaneously admits the truth of two contradictory, logically incompatible, but ontologically equally necessary assertions. An antinomy testifies to the existence of a mystery beyond which the human reason cannot penetrate. This mystery nevertheless is actualised and lived in religious experience." (Sergius Bulgakov: The Wisdom of God p 116n. cited God was in Christ p 108f). But there are in fact two possible definitions here: the holding of two truths which are, or appear to be, contradictory, and the holding of a mystery which is beyond human understanding but is realised in existential religious experience. The first can be put in the propositional form 'both x and not-x', while the other need not be in this form. Baillie never clarifies his own use of the term but seems, either knowingly or not, more frequently to favour the second. That is paradox does not necessarily involve contradiction, but we have to deal with a mystery which may include more than one truth; or perhaps we should speak of a truth with several poles or facets.

Several critics have noticed this lack of clarity. J.L. Hick, referring to one of Baillie's stock examples, comments, "That God created all things ex nihilo is not a self-contradictory statement; it does not contain within itself logically incompatible components. It is 'paradoxical' only in the sense that it is empirically unverifiable and therefore de fide." (S.J.T. Vol 11, 1958, p 4). Another critic, J.L.M. Haire believes that some element of contradiction can be kept for 'creatio ex nihilo', but argues that the element of contradiction in the different examples of paradox which Baillie uses to support his case in 'God was in Christ' is not always the same, and that Baillie has failed to work out the similarities and differences between them.[1]

In the sense of a mystery located in the realm of religious experience and asserted 'existentially' paradox is found throughout Baillie's work. In a sense it is present in his stress on morality and the counsel to the doubter to 'do right' expecting to find comfort and eventually faith through moral experience. It is present in his acknowledgement that moral categories do not apply to God as they apply in human affairs but that, though only symbolic, they must be used. And it is present also in his argument that faith is implicit in religious experience and not deduced from it.

Perhaps his fullest sustained use of paradox is in the last chapter of 'Faith in God' where he looks at the problem of suffering and providence. He points out that the Christian who suffers will assert that nothing which befalls him is beyond God's love and care, but will also recognise suffering as evil and commit himself to struggle against it. Finally he points here, as he does in 'God was in Christ', to a number of other paradoxes. There is the apparent contradiction between justification by faith and morality. In the teaching of Jesus there is the assurance that the Kingdom has come and the necessity to fight for it; and the teaching that prayer includes both asking God for things and the confidence that he already knows what is best. In the life of Jesus, of course, the supreme paradox is the cross, and Baillie stresses Jesus' fear and abhorrence of it but

1. cf S.J.T. Vol 17, 1964, p 307f.

acceptance of it as the will of God.

This sort of thing is eloquent and moving in the discussion of Christian experience, and in that realm is probably inevitable. Baillie returns to the paradox of grace in the article '<u>Philosophers and Theologians on the Freedom of the Will</u>', to which we have already referred. The problem is to reconcile a dependence on grace with human freedom. His solution is to suggest that the normal notions of freedom used in moral discussion may not be enough. Might it not be that there is a freedom beyond morality which is expressed not in the ability to perform totally undetermined actions but in willing obedience to, and dependence on, God. This seems to be the experience of the saints. "It seems plain then, that there is a quite luminous and practical truth underlying the mysterious statement that only by the aid of divine grace can a man be free to do and be what he ought to do and be. It means at least this, as a mere matter of psychological description: that the best kind of living, or the finest type of character, does not come through sheer volitional effort to realise an ideal, but in a more indirect way, as the fruit of a life of faith in God." (<u>op cit</u> p 136f). This seems a version of the idea that when a man is set free by God he is not set free to become anything, that would lead back to sin and bondage, but he is free to become the man God intended him to be. In the language of the Genesis story, he is restored to the state of un-fallen Adam understood as '<u>non-posse peccare</u>'. Though the Christian would say that he is in the process of being restored to this state rather than that he is in it. Put in this way there are marked similarities here to the thought of Quick.

However, given that this describes Christian experience, the question arises whether this provides an adequate approach to the person of Christ. At a much earlier stage we referred to the figure of concentric circles to illustrate what seems to be Baillie's idea of the operation of grace in the world. It is found in growing degrees of intensity in the whole of creation; in mankind as the peak of creation; in believers as those who have responded to it; and uniquely in Christ. But does this scheme keep the uniqueness of Christ? Is he still presented as the 'Supreme Believer'? It hardly seems enough that he should be the great recipient of grace. For

orthodox Christianity he must also be presented as the great bearer of grace, and as himself the source of grace.

It is for reasons such as this that Hick suggests that Baillie is finally left with adoptionism. He notices two areas of confusion in Baillie's thought. First in his use of the term 'divine'. It is possible to say that all men are divine in so far as God operates within them, but in the case of Jesus we do not want such an adjectival use but must rather use a substantive such as 'Deity'. Though Baillie has noted that it is more congenial to Christian theology to speak of Jesus as God than as divine, Hick does not believe that he has consistently observed the distinction, and suggests he has tended to speak of the 'Divinity of Christ' using the word in an adjectival sense. "For the essence of Baillie's suggestion is that 'God was in Christ' in the sense in which He is in all good men, namely as inspiring them, through the paradox of His grace within them to good works." (op cit p 6). The result is that Christ's uniqueness is reduced to one of degree of divinely enabled performance.

Secondly, he presents Baillie's position with a dilemma regarding the paradox of grace. On the one hand he must take a strictly predestinarian view "... by which God determines man's choices even whilst such choices remain, from a human point of view, free and responsible decisions." (op cit p 8). This, according to Hick, leads to a conception of irresistible grace and completely rules out human freedom. On the other hand he can adopt a more moderate form of the 'paradox of grace' and say that when a man chooses rightly, he is in fact allowing the grace of God, which is always available, to operate within him. In this case God is not over-ruling human freedom. He suggests that Baillie chooses the second. Thus Christ is presented as the one man who has always allowed God's grace to work in him. He is therefore different from others in degree, not in kind. But though Baillie has refused the strict predestinarian view of the 'paradox of grace' he comes very close to it "... and allows it to spread a film of protective ambiguity over his argument." (ibid p 8) Hick concludes with the suggestion, which Haire accepts, that the paradox of grace is helpful in understanding the human experience of Jesus, but leaves his deity untouched. Perhaps this is what we

should expect since we have seen that Baillie prefers to begin from the humanity, and that his thinking on the paradox of grace begins with the experience of believers and was, as it were, put out from there to explain Jesus.

However, it would be grossly unfair to Baillie to imagine that he had not anticipated this sort of criticism of his view and tried to defend against it. Though we naturally know the paradox first in human experience, he asserts that there it is merely a reflection of the supreme example in Jesus. In him it exists at a perfect pitch and our experience of it derives in some way from his. It is only in seeking an explanation that we move in the opposite direction. Furthermore he goes on to argue that early Christian experience of grace led inevitably to the doctrine of the Trinity which includes the conception of the pre-existence of Christ. In this way all non-Christian experience of grace - and we have noted his reluctance to over stress the uniqueness or exclusiveness of Christianity - can also be attributed to Jesus. Clearly he intends more than a merely historical priority for Jesus, but he does not seem to notice that, if these arguments are followed, it would be more natural to speak of the 'grace of Jesus', which seems to 'distance' him from the experience which others have.

Hick's criticisms were answered by John Baillie. Two points from this answer are of particular interest. John Baillie argues that, in his brother's opinion, when a difference of degree is 'taken at the absolute pitch' - which was Donald Baillie's phrase - it is already a difference in kind. "I have, ... heard my brother say that it is misleading in such a connexion to rely too much on the familiar distinction between degree and kind (or sense), because the absolute and perfect differs from the imperfect and relative not merely in degree but in kind, just as infinity and eternity are no mere prolongation of the finite and temporal, but belong to another order of being." (S.J.T. Vol 11, 1958 p 265). But this hardly seems a satisfactory argument. In speaking of an absolute paradox and a partial or incomplete paradox one is presumably speaking of the same sort of thing - a paradox. Yet I do not think it would be generally accepted that the infinite is the same sort of thing as the finite, or that eternity is the same sort of thing as time.

Indeed we shall see later that, in another context, Donald Baillie himself makes the generally accepted theological point that eternity is not mere extension of time. That some greater difference is at least assumed seems to be implied by the argument that the unique sense in which Jesus' experience of the paradox of grace must be construed is, following H.R. Mackintosh, in terms of his work and vocation. It was Jesus' unique vocation to be the saviour of the world, it is not ours.

Secondly, he suggests that, faced with Hick's dilemma, his brother would have chosen strict predestinarianism. The understanding of prevenient grace which Hick puts forward as the moderate version of the paradox of grace is not paradoxical at all. It is merely a matter of offer and acceptance. He concludes, rather grandly, "It is perhaps not surprising that Professor Hick should suspect my brother of leaning too much towards a humanitarian and too easily non-paradoxical interpretation of the Incarnation, if he attributes to him so humanitarian and so little paradoxical a view of that relation of grace to free-will which he took to be a reflection, and thus a pointer to the understanding, of the union of Godhead and manhood in Christ." (ibid p 269f).

As far as the paradox of grace is concerned John Baillie seems to have got the better of this argument. As we saw from the article 'Philosophers and Theologians on the Freedom of the Will', Donald Baillie has a far deeper understanding than Hick allows. For his view freedom is not lost but gained by dependence on divine grace. That which is normally termed freedom, the ability to perform undetermined actions, represents a 'fallen' state in comparison with the sinlessness, 'non posse peccare', which is God's plan and the purpose for which man was created. It is the idea expressed in the phrase 'whose service is perfect freedom'. However, this is still to deal with the experience of the human Jesus. There is no suggestion of Deity there, and it is difficult to see how it could be provided by talk of vocation.

Baillie, as we have seen, did not like the ontological categories of Chalcedon, but it is difficult to see how he can

affirm the Deity of Jesus, which he clearly wants to affirm, without something like them. His own view does not seem to keep in the person of Christ anything 'continuous with Godhead'.[1] He mentions one other attempt to do this in terms of grace - Aquinas distinction between gratia habitualis, which all men have and which Christ therefore had as a man, and gratia unionis which only Christ had and which maintained his 'continuity with Godhead'. Baillie comments that "... this seems an artificial distinction." (God was in Christ p 128). It may indeed be artificial, but it does seem to be a recognition that there is an infinite qualitative distinction between God and man, even if the man should be the greatest of saints. Aquinas has tried to keep this. Baillie, for all his protestations, seems to have lost it and to have fallen into some form of adoptionism. However, that was clearly not his intention, and we must take account of the fact that he wishes to keep a full Chalcedonian Christology as we turn to consider his thought on atonement.

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1. In view of the admiration which both Baillies appear to have for H.R. Mackintosh and particularly for his use of the idea of 'vocation' with its stress on 'will' in his Christology, it is interesting to note that Gore had criticised Mackintosh's attitude to Chalcedonian 'substance' thinking on precisely the lines suggested above, ie that to dispense with 'substance' was to dispense with the element of 'continuity with Godhead'. Accepting that 'substance' thinking could be unethical, and arguing that 'substance' should be taken to mean 'real thing', he asserts "... when we speak of the Son and the Spirit as 'of one substance' with the Father, we mean that they belong to the one real being which we call God; and when we speak of Christ as of one substance with us, we mean that He took the real being of man,...." In the end Baillie does not seem able to keep the first of these assertions. cf C. Gore: The Reconstruction of Belief, One Vol edition 1926, pp 848-863.

If Jesus is the unique bearer and source of God's grace or 'personal influence', we are led to return to our original questions and to ask in what way we are benefitted by this grace and how it works? That the whole process of incarnation, death, and resurrection was 'for us men and for our salvation' is axiomatic, but how is the salvation effected and in what does it consist?

Baillie has already given some answers to these questions in his stress on revelation. This not only gives us the important vantage point from which to regard history, which we noted, but, more importantly, it gives us a better idea of the nature of God. Baillie had never suggested that God was simply a law-giver. There is always a much greater personal warmth in his approach than that. Yet in his earlier work it is not always clear why he has not stopped short at the conception of God as giver and up-holder of the moral law. In fact, of course, he has assumed much more from scripture and the Christian tradition than he always acknowledged. Later he put much more stress on revelation with the whole process of the incarnation and death of Jesus as its climax. He writes "The whole story in the Bible suggests not so much phrases like 'human quest' as phrases like 'divine revelation', 'divine vocation', 'divine visitation'." (God was in Christ p 64). And writing later of the death of Jesus he says "When His early followers spoke of His death on the cross as a supreme expression of love for men, it was not so much of the love of Jesus that they spoke as of the love of God who sent Him." (ibid p 68, cf p 184f). From seeing Jesus thus as the revelation of God and interpreting his person by means of the 'paradox of grace', Baillie then uses that paradox to describe God, "He is the One who gives us what He demands of us, provides the obedience that He requires..." (ibid p 144). Later he dwells at length on the revelation in Jesus of God's concern for outcasts and sinners. The best authenticated feature of the record of Jesus is that men were astonished by "...His habit of intercourse with men and women of doubtful character and by His attitude to them. ...He appeared to be more interested in these people than in anybody else, and He practically said that God was too." (ibid p 182).

From speaking of the revelation of God in Jesus in this way,

he goes on, in a manner reminiscent of Leonard Hodgson, to speak of the development of the doctrine of the Trinity. Jesus' followers, having experienced the paradox of grace themselves through his personality, made two discoveries: they found that the experience did not come to an end when he was no longer physically with them, and they found that it also came to others who had never known him in the flesh by means of the 'story' about him and their own witness to him. Thus the doctrine of the Trinity was developed.

However, important though all this is, it is necessary to go beyond the idea of revelation. The New Testament witness, and the life and teaching of Jesus himself, point to the importance of an act of God. Jesus did not merely come to 'show' something, but to 'do' something. Perhaps more important, revelation on its own would not answer the need for forgiveness or explain the Christian's consciousness of being forgiven.

The need for, and experience of, forgiveness seems to be the Achilles heel of any theological system based exclusively on morality. In speaking of the 'paradox of moralism' Baillie pointed out that the quest for goodness is self-defeating. However, there is a further complication in the moral approach. The more a man recognises what he ought to do and ought to be, the more conscious he is of the need for forgiveness. But the moral law itself does not provide for forgiveness. The thoroughly good man cannot forgive himself, forgiveness must come from outside.[1]

Baillie recognised this point in 'Faith in God', though it is dealt with there in little more than a side. Christianity, he notes, deals with our sins, and for that something more than the sympathy and example of a great comrade or leader is required. When a man becomes conscious of his sins the need is "... to believe in a God who cannot only win us back from our evil ways and make the best of the evil we have wrought, but in some sense blot out our past sins, drown them in His mercy, turn our sorrow for them into the joy of

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1. It will be recalled that this same point was made, with a quotation from P.T. Forsyth, in the criticism of Rashdall. cf p 124f above.

forgiveness. But how can there be a real forgiveness of sins, which will be of any real comfort to the penitent, unless he can by faith rise up to lose himself in the love of a God who is not simply a great Comrade, but in some sense the very source of the moral law which has been broken?" (op cit p 292).

Later he commented on the apparent absence in the modern world of any sense of sin or felt need for forgiveness, and the tendency to dismiss such conceptions as morbid relics of past ways of thought now to be outgrown. However, he argued, for serious people in a generation which had witnessed two world wars such an attitude could only be apparent. The use of psychological jargon about a 'moral-failure complex' or a 'moral inferiority complex' could not gloss over a deeper dissatisfaction which Christianity traditionally recognised as a consciousness of sin. Certainly psychiatric treatment could provide a cure for some complexes by tracing them to half-forgotton and frequently trivial early experiences. In other words by showing that the complex had no real foundation. But the consciousness of sin, he argued, was not of that sort, "For in this case the malaise has a real foundation, which is not trivial or innocent but solid and evil: the fact of moral failure, the fact that a man has disobeyed his conscience, betrayed his ideals, tarnished his character, lost his battle. These are hard facts, and the sting is not taken out of them when they are faced in the light of day. That makes them look worse instead of better." (God was in Christ p 164). Such a malaise cannot be solved simply on the level of morality, but only when it is seen as a personal offence against God who offers forgiveness to those who could not in moral honesty forgive themselves.

Such forgiveness is not an easy overlooking of faults. We know that much from human relationships. While in a shallow friendship a slight may be casually disregarded, where a really deep and genuine love exists a betrayal causes a deeper hurt and can only be forgiven at great cost to the one who forgives. Strangely the greater the love, the greater the likelihood of forgiveness; but also, the greater the love the deeper the hurt and the greater the cost of forgiveness. But the love of God is perfect, thus, "If I have

betrayed it, that is the ultimate betrayal. That is what has to be wiped out, and such an 'atonement' must be the most difficult, the most supernatural, the costliest thing in the world." (ibid p 175). It is this cost, this atonement, that the New Testament finds in the death of Jesus. There we find the Old Testament sacrificial terminology taken up and applied to him as the costly sacrifice provided by God's forgiving love to expiate the sins of the penitent.

This does not mean that Jesus himself always clearly saw his death in this way. As far as he was concerned the cross was accepted as part of the will of God which he accepted by faith. Baillie suggests that towards the end of his ministry he applied to himself the deutero-Isaianic prophecies of the Suffering servant, arguing that had he not done so it is difficult to explain why these ideas became so prominent in early Christian thought. However, for Jesus himself, in the plainest historical sense, he died for sinners in so far as it was his love for them which led his enemies to execute him. As we noted above the indisputable fact about him, which we saw as a signal revelation of the love of God, is that unlike normal Rabbis he associated with sinners and social outcasts and assured them of God's concern and willingness to forgive. In human terms it was this behaviour which led to his death. Here there are passages in Baillie which could have been written by Rashdall.

But it is most noticeable, and Baillie makes this point at some length, that his followers did not interpret his death in terms of Jesus' love for men, but in terms of God's love, God's forgiveness, and God's act of redemption. Furthermore this is interpreted as a costly, sacrificial, love. However, they make no contrast between the love of God and the wrath of God, and do not have the idea that God's attitude was changed from wrath to love by the death of Christ. It is not that God's wrath is not real. Baillie refuses Dodd's suggestion that the wrath of God is somehow to be understood as the working out of impersonal forces apart from God. Rather his wrath is not something to be propitiated and changed to mercy it is "... identical with the consuming fire of inexorable divine love in relation to our sins." (ibid p 189). As Denney had done, he points out that the Greek καταλλάσσω means 'reconciliation' and does not have the idea

of 'payment' which normally attaches to the English word 'atonement', at least in popular usage. Furthermore he insists on the New Testament emphasis on the initiative of God in the act of reconciliation. Following Dodd he argues that the idea of propitiation in the ἱλάσκεσθαι group of words (Romans 3:24; 1 John 2:2, 4:10) is in accordance with pagan usage but out of place in the New Testament where the meaning must be governed by the stress on God's love and initiative.

Indeed, he argues, even in the Old Testament the pagan idea of propitiation had been left behind since it was God who provided the ritual of sacrifice. Thus the basic idea is of 'covering' or 'wiping out' that which comes between man and God. In the Old Testament of course man had to provide the victim. "But this is the amazing new fact which emerges when we come to the New Testament: that God even provides the victim that is offered, and the victim is His own Son, the Only-begotten. In short, 'it is <u>all</u> of God': the desire to forgive and reconcile, the appointing of means, the provision of the victim as it were from His own bosom at infinite cost. It all takes place within the very life of God Himself: ..." (<u>ibid</u> p 188).

Thus we see the death of Jesus, as an event in history capable of being explained in purely historical terms, being given an interpretation which traces it back to God the Father in heaven, and thus sets it in the context of eternity. Now, in similar terms to Quick, Baillie sets himself to consider the relation of the two. It is not a case of dropping one side. "To reduce the importance of the historical event would be contrary to every instinct of Christian faith; and yet it seems impossible to say that the divine sin-bearing was confined to that moment of time, or is anything less than eternal." (<u>ibid</u> p 190). We have been prepared for this by his treatment of forgiveness and of the nature of God. Forgiveness, we saw, must always be costly to the one who forgives; and it is of the nature of God to be forgiving and thus to bear the cost, even before the historical event of Calvary.

Here we are brought to a recurring problem for theology, the relation of history and eternity, and what we can mean by eternity. For Baillie, to speak of God as eternal means, "... not that God has

no relation to time and no experience of it ... but that, while embracing time in His experience, while knowing past, present and future, God is not confined, as we are, within the limits of temporality and successiveness, but transcends these limits, so that He can experience past, present and future all in one. ... (He) ... has a direct 'vertical' relation to each moment of our temporal experience; ..." (ibid p 191). Thus to say that God was uniquely present in the passion of Jesus does not mean that He was unforgiving before that, or that His work of reconciliation does not go on in every age. "It is not that the historical episode is a mere symbol of something 'timeless': it is actually a part (the incarnate part) of the eternal divine sin-bearing." (ibid p 191f). Later he adds that it is not enough to say that God eternally foresaw, or planned, the work of atonement, "... it must in the last analysis be an eternal work of atonement, supratemporal as the life of God is, but not 'timeless' as an abstraction is; appearing incarnate once, but touching every point of history, and going on as long as sins continue to be committed and there are sinners to be reconciled." (ibid p 194n).

The idea here is of God's eternal forgiveness - for which he must bear the cost - 'breaking in' to the temporal sequence at one unique point. Again one could speak in terms of revelation and say that here the veil is temporarily drawn aside to show what is always true of God. This eternal aspect, he suggests, has not been stressed traditionally, at least in the West and particularly in Protestantism, for fear of denying the uniqueness of the cross. It has further been obscured by false ideas of the need for propitiation. However he is able to quote from various sources to show that the basic idea has nevertheless frequently found expression, particularly in the realm of eucharistic theology.

Thus he interprets atonement, as Quick had done, exclusively in terms of the sacrificial model, with the cross as the unique 'coming in to time' of the cost which God's forgiveness must always pay. But there is a noticeable difference in 'tone' in that where Quick emphasises the more Catholic idea of the Christian being taken up into the perfect life offered to God, Baillie has a more Protestant stress on the costliness to God.

He alludes briefly to the close connection between death and resurrection in Pauline thought, by which we have a picture of an eternal conflict with evil which is also an eternal victory. This, as he says, is near to Aulen's 'Christus Victor' thinking.[1] Elsewhere he had noted that some New Testament interpretations of the cross are drawn from other than the sacrificial realm. In spite of the eloquence with which he puts his position, and the wealth of Biblical quotations and allusions, it seems a weakness that he has not considered these other interpretations more seriously. He is ruled by the idea that all must be seen in terms of personal relations and, since sin and the element of cost must be considered, he finds the sacrificial model most suitable for his purpose. Probably he would suggest that the legal metaphors would be less personal, and to that extent less suitable. Nevertheless the fact that the Pauline use of the law, and the great themes of sin-bearing and ransom are passed over almost casually must be considered a major weakness in his position.

The stress on personal relationships appears again when we turn to his treatment of sacraments. It seems to be chiefly through the sacraments that he sees God's grace 'coming home' to the believer. Thus he welcomes the increased interest in sacramental theology which he saw in current Christian thinking, and, in his own tradition, the practice of more frequent communion.

We have seen that he accepted the idea of a 'sacramental universe'. There could be nothing odd or superstitious about the use of material elements for a spiritual end. Indeed the suspicion of such 'oddness' betrayed a false distinction between the spiritual and the material. Such a distinction, he thought, was basically un-Christian. The whole of creation owed its existence to God and was thus suitable to express his relationship to man. The great distinction was between life lived in relation to him, and life lived on a purely natural level. Whether or not material elements were fittingly used to express this relationship depended not on themselves but on their use. This, he thought, could be clarified if the concept of 'spiritual' in the New

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1. cf '<u>God was in Christ</u>' p 199f

Testament was understood by the modern concept of 'personal'. Then "... there need be nothing unspiritual, because there need be nothing impersonal, in the religious use of material elements as 'sensible signs' and thus as instruments of divine grace." (The Theology of the Sacraments p 49). In fact, in human terms, material things such as gifts are commonly used to express a personal relationship and, quite apart from the sacraments, sense experience and metaphors from it, such as 'hearing the Word', are commonly used in Christian worship.

The particular sacramental acts of the Christian church, and he limits himself to the Dominical sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist, are not taken arbitrarily from the 'sacramental universe'. They go back to the institution of Jesus and thus 'place' Christianity historically. They establish a clear connection with the 'Word made flesh', and they are, at least, seals on the promises of Jesus. This is essentially so even if it should not be possible to trace them to the ipssissima verba of Jesus. What is behind them is the whole act of the incarnation, death and resurrection. Once more here, as throughout his work on sacraments, he is remarkably close to the thinking of Quick, though again with a difference in 'tone' due to an apparently greater concern for history. Thus, though he professes that one need not be too worried if historical criticism should prove that Jesus did not institute the sacraments - since they would remain as a response to and, presumably, vehicle of the entire episode of the incarnation - he does in fact believe that both can be traced back to Jesus. One suspects that his attitude to them would have been different were this really not possible.

However, although the sacraments depend on the incarnation and are in a sense a link between the modern believer and that historical episode, he does not accept the idea of the church and sacraments as an 'extension of the incarnation' in the sense in which it is often put. This theory suggests that salvation somehow depends on the fact of the incarnation rather than on the once for all nature of the acts of the Incarnate. Furthermore it implies the non-Biblical antithesis between spirit and matter which is somehow overcome by the infusion of spirit into matter. As we have just seen Baillie does not accept

that distinction; the incarnation was not the infusion of the spiritual into the material, but God's entering humanity. Furthermore, orthodox Christianity insists that Jesus remains incarnate, in that having become man he remains man, but that that humanity is removed from us - in traditional terms it is in heaven until the Parousia. The 'Body of Christ' language in the epistles, which is often quoted in support of 'extension of the incarnation' thinking, Baillie holds to be metaphorical.

This does not mean that Christ is permanently absent from his church. Nor does it mean that a link with the 'Jesus of History' must be maintained by a 'pipe-line' theory of Apostolic Succession. He is present to the church through the Holy Spirit working through the Word and Sacraments. This is different both from his incarnate presence and from his future coming. "Christ is present with us, yet not in the way in which He was present in the days of His flesh, and again not in the way in which we shall enjoy His immediate presence in the final consummation. In this interim period He is present with us through the Holy Spirit in the Church." (ibid p 69). During this period the church is 'on a journey' and needs the sacraments both to look back to that historical episode from which it takes its beginning, and to look forward to the final enjoyment of the Kingdom of God.

But what of the Protestant emphasis on faith? Here again, without using the expression, Baillie's thought seems to be controlled by the 'paradox of grace'. The sacraments, he suggests, do not depend on faith, but they operate through faith, and that faith, though it is fully human, is created by God. He illustrates this by a parable of a small boy entrusted to a nursery governess which is worth quoting at length. "When she arrives the little fellow is taken into the room where she is, and left in her care. But she is strange to him, he does not trust her, but looks distantly at this strange woman from the opposite corner of the room. She knows that she cannot do anything with him until she has won his confidence. She knows she has to win it. The little boy cannot manufacture it, cannot make himself trust the governess. His faith in her is something which he cannot create - only she can create it. And she

knows that she cannot create it by forcing it; she has to respect the personality of the child; and to try to take the citadel by storm would be worse than useless, and would produce fear and distrust instead of confidence.

"She sets about her task gently, using various means - words, gestures and smiles, and perhaps gifts, all of which convey something of the kindness of her heart. Until at last the little fellow's mistrust is melted away, she has won his confidence, and of his own free will he responds to her advances and crosses the floor to sit on her knee. Now that her graciousness, using all these means, has created his faith, she can carry on the good work she has begun." (ibid p 53).

Turning to the sacrament of Baptism he acknowledges that the Biblical evidence for the actual words of institution is poor. However this is compensated for by its clear place in the life and teaching of Jesus and the earliest New Testament tradition. As for the manner of baptism, he agrees that total immersion is excellent symbolism for the motif of death and resurrection, and has a very powerful psychological effect at the moment of administration. Yet the sacrament is also intended to express ideas of cleansing and the outpouring of the Spirit which are bettersymbolised by the sprinkling of water. Moreover, while the psychological effect at the moment is important, the intention and faith with which the sacrament is performed are more important.

He defends infant Baptism, at least for the children of believers, on the grounds that it signifies entry into the church. To deny it would seem to mean that there is no such thing as Christian childhood, and that children of Christians were outside the covenant. In fact Christian Baptism is seen as the fulfilment both of Jewish proselyte Baptism, in which the children of the Gentile convert who was becoming a Jew were baptised with him, and also of circumcision, in which the children of believers were given the sign of the covenant.

This raises the question of how the child is benefitted if it

has no conscious faith. Baillie suggests that such a question betrays a false individualism. The child is part of a human family, and part of the church family. The benefits of the sacrament operate in response to the faith of the parents and the church. By this sacrament the child is brought into the environment of the church and there finds the 'personal influence' of grace. To the suggestion that a Christian home and church might provide this influence apart from the sacrament of Baptism he replies, "... there must be a real and important difference between the environment given to a child by a Church which takes infant baptism seriously and the environment given by a Church which denies this sacrament to infants. A Church which practises infant baptism with real belief and understanding inevitably has an attitude to its children which makes it in a peculiar sense a means of grace to them; and every time the sacrament is administered to an infant 'in the face of the congregation' the Church, and especially the parents are brought afresh into that attitude. In such a Church a child is indeed brought through baptism into a new and supernatural environment." (ibid p 85f).

This is all good impressive, sermonic, writing, but it seems to me to be not at all convincing. It would be extremely difficult to argue that churches of the Baptist denomination do not provide the environment indicated, or that they would not say all these things about a service of infant dedication taken seriously. He also seems to come dangerously near to justifying the sacrament as a useful visual aid to others rather than for its benefit to the recipient. His real case seems to be the Biblical background, the fact that the sacrament is part of the tradition of the church, and the suggestion that there is such a thing as Christian childhood and that the children of Christians should be seen to be in the covenant. He is on much surer ground when he speaks of the benefits to the child of growing in a Christian environment, being surrounded by the love and care of parents and church, and thus being led to faith of its own. Thus the initiative of God has preceded man's faith. "Surely it is in subsequent faith going on right through a man's life that, above all the sacrament becomes efficacious and a channel of the grace of God." (ibid p 89). In that case, as he says, more needs to be made of confirmation or its equivalent.

In his approach to the Eucharist he is clearly influenced by Roman and Anglo-Catholic thinking. It is worth noting at this point that the only expression of his thought we have is from posthumously published lectures delivered in a Presbyterian setting. He thus, perhaps naturally, affirms the Reformation principle, "... that the existence of a sacrament depends entirely on the word of promise, so that it is not anything in the material element, but entirely the divine Word that can make water or bread and wine sacramental." (ibid p 43). He also has several references to Calvin and to the Westminster Confession. He seems keen to make sure that the Reformed tradition should not appear to compare unfavourably with a more Catholic emphasis. Speaking of the Catholic tradition he writes, "Surely we are not going to be content with believing less than they do - content with a smaller, poorer belief." And later, "Surely we cannot be content to say that Roman Catholics or Anglo-Catholics make the divine presence in the sacrament more real than we do." (ibid pp 93, 97). Presumably, in view of the audience addressed, some allowance must be made for rhetoric here.

Having asserted that the whole action of the sacrament, not simply the words, must be a dramatic symbol, he deals as Quick had done with two major problems - the Real Presence, and the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

As we have noted on several occasions he recognises degrees of God's presence quite apart from the sacraments. God is not contained in his creation but he is present to it. The degree of this presence may be said to be more 'personal' to man than to the rest of creation, and more 'personal' still to believers. It is this type of presence, a presence on a 'personal' level where some degree of reciprocity is at least possible, that he finds in the sacraments. He illustrates this with a point from Marcel on the use of the word 'with'. Tables and chairs can be juxtaposed and are then said to be 'alongside' or 'next to' each other, but they are not said to be 'with' each other. People may similarly be said to be 'alongside' or 'next to' each other, but if they enter into a more personal relationship they are said to be 'with' each other.

It is in this latter form that God is 'with' his people in the

eucharist. Such a presence, Baillie argues, must be described as objective and not merely subjective. God is really present. The believer does not have to conjure him from his own subjective emotions. He is as truly present to faith as the elements are to sense. "... that is the most real presence conceivable for a divine reality in this present world. The most objective and penetrating kind of presence that God can give us is through faith. ... St. Paul's prayer for his friends at Ephesus is 'that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith'. That is how Christ dwells in men's hearts in this present world." (ibid p 101). But such a presence is in fact a 'presence in absence' since sacraments only have value for the church during its time of pilgrimage. The presence of Christ in the eucharist brings together the memory of his past presence in the historical episode of the incarnation, and the anticipation of his return in glory.

The question of sacrifice, he notes, is a much more divisive one. But he believes that, apart from the Church of Rome, the differences are not as significant as they seem. Problems are caused by emotional responses to such words as 'priest' and 'altar'; and there is a perfectly justifiable revulsion against the Roman doctrine of the Mass in its medieval form. It is this historically conditioned revulsion which is reflected in the refusal to use the idea of sacrifice which is found in the great Protestant Confessions. Here he quotes the Anglican Thirty Nine Articles, and the Presbyterian Westminster Confession.

He rejects the view that Jesus' words 'this do in remembrance of me' should be interpreted sacrificially. 'Remembrance', he agrees, should probably have a much stronger meaning than is normal in the English 'memorial', but it does not go so far as re-presenting. Yet there is a sense, he believes, in which sacrifice or offering is involved in the eucharist. He points out that most Christians would be happy to speak of a sacrifice of worship, prayer, or praise, and of the sacrificial offering of the believer's life to God. However, such giving to God is not something which man can do apart from Christ. These offerings can only be made in union with His one offering.

At this point he repeats a lot of the discussion about the relationship between history and eternity which we have already seen in dealing with his thought on atonement.[1] He argues again that, while it is true that Christ once bore our sins in time, "... we cannot say that God's bearing of sin was confined to that moment. In some sense it is an eternal activity or passion of God's, and it has its direct 'vertical' relation to every moment of our sinful human history; ..." (ibid p 117). One way of expressing this is in the concept of Christ's heavenly intercession so prominent in the epistle to the Hebrews. But this, of course, is seen as a pleading of the efficacy of His death. Thus it is only in union with Him, and in the power of his sacrifice, that Christians can make their lesser sacrifices.

Gathering his thoughts on the subject he asks finally, "... may we not say something like this: that in the sacrament, Christ Himself being truly present, He unites us by faith with His eternal sacrifice, that we may plead and receive its benefits and offer ourselves in prayer and praise to God? If we can say this, then surely we... have our doctrine of eucharistic sacrifice." (ibid p 118). This, he argues, with many quotations, is in accord with much modern Anglo-Catholic and Eastern Orthodox thought. As we might expect Quick is quoted here. More surprisingly perhaps, though perhaps more useful in a Presbyterian assembly, similar comments are quoted from Calvin.

It could be argued against him that the similarities which he thus claims to find in different schools of thought are not so great as he would like to think. Quick seems to have a much richer doctrine, coming from a more full-blooded acceptance of the instrumentality of the sacraments. Calvin, on the other hand, seems to think most naturally not of the work of Christ being somehow brought down to man in the sacrament, but rather of man being somehow taken up into heaven where Christ remains. Baillie seems to fall uneasily between the two, and to confuse the matter somewhat by occasionally using the language of devotion to gloss over a theological point. Though doubtless he could argue that such a distinction is false.

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1. with 'Theology of the Sacraments' p 116f, cf 'God was in Christ' p 190ff

Of the theologians covered in this study Denney is clearly the purest representative of the Protestant position. He remains the orthodox Protestant stress on the objective act of God seen as substitutionary atonement, refusing the weaker idea of representation on the grounds that it indicates that something is put forward from man's side. His uneasy attitude to the person of the Holy Spirit and his ambivalence about the sacraments seem to come from an aversion to any suggestion of substance thinking. His whole approach however shows that he sees his position to be under attack, and he is keen to show that it is nevertheless the correct and only Biblical view. It can be said of him that he is inclined to state his opponents views in ways which make it easier for him to destroy them.[1] Nevertheless he is not indifferent to criticisms of his own position.

I have attempted to show that his use of 'legal' metaphors is by no means insensitive,[2] and that the whole approach typified by 'substitution' thinking has greater strength than is often allowed. Further, I tried to suggest that, in spite of the real criticisms urged against it, this sort of approach is dealing with man's predicament at a far deeper level than its critics allow, and often at a deeper level than many of the critics manage themselves.[3] In Oman's phrase exponents of this view show themselves willing to live in the 'half lights', and to move towards 'the dim vistas of man's spiritual horizon'. It is interesting, and surely significant, that even such opponents of this view as Rashdall and Quick are obliged to admit that it is true to Paul.

It seems somewhat superficial to argue that the modern mind no longer works with such a high conception of law.[4] Such criticism overlooks the fact that the metaphor of law is a metaphor, and that

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that relationship, since God remains faithful, Reid goes on, following Barth, to work this out in terms of God nevertheless beholding even sinful man 'in Christ'.

1. cf Reid op cit p 90.
2. cf supra pp 38ff. 60.
3. cf supra pp 119-128
4. cf F.W. Dillistone: The Christian Understanding of Atonement pp 203-215 and supra p 60.

it is used very carefully and in a well defined way by Denney. It might also be difficult to argue that modern man's attitude to law has changed so much that he does not at least demand that things should be 'fair'.

Similarly a good deal of unnecessary confusion seems to be introduced into the question by discussions on the moral worth of retributive punishment, and on the use of the phrase 'penal' in relation to the sufferings of Christ. Retribution may not be the sole aim of punishment if the intention is to re-establish the wrong-doer in society. Yet to omit the element of retribution completely would be to treat the offender as one who is unable to pay for his offence, or as one who cannot be expected to behave differently. In this way a child is frequently not punished for some misdemeanour on the grounds that 'one cannot expect anything else from a child'. But to extend this attitude would not be a help in the rehabilitation of offenders where one aim is to show that they are, or can be, responsible members of society. That is that they are precisely not, as children, those from whom nothing else can be expected. The idea that punishment has been borne, or payment made, is a strong psychological factor. Though this is not to argue that there is any equivalence between the sufferings of Christ and those due to man. Such criticism gains strength by pushing the metaphor farther than it was intended that it should go.

It must also be pointed out, as we saw Denney point out, that to describe Jesus' sufferings as 'penal' does not imply a vindictive[1] punishment. But it certainly involves an acknowledgement of Jesus' real entering in to that area of suffering and death which is the 'penalty' of sin appointed by God.[2] Indeed one of the most impressive features of Denney's work is his serious approach to death as a spiritual fact and experience, and not simply as the running down of a physical organism.

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1. I use the word 'vindictive' here in its general sense of 'spiteful', not in the sense of 'vindicating' which is in fact the idea Denney has in mind.
2. This is worked out in V. Taylor: Jesus and His Sacrifice esp. pp 285-290. In a footnote on p 286 Taylor gives an impressive list of defenders of the 'penal' nature of Jesus' sufferings, including Denney.

Nevertheless the tide was running against Denney's type of theology. In Liberal Protestantism a new attitude to man, which owed more to evolution than to the Bible, combined with a revulsion against the supposed immorality of Protestant orthodoxy.[1] The idea of sin changed. It was now seen as weakness or wrong decisions, but neither the Protestant stress on culpable rebellion leading to judgement, nor the Catholic stress on the tained nature which separated man from God, was kept. The God-man relationship was regarded from the manward side and theology took its starting point from man's religious instincts. This led to the high ethical idealism of Rashdall, but even on its own terms it lacked depth in the form in which Rashdall stated it. It did not really look seriously at man's religious strivings.

But it is from this background, and perhaps particularly from the recognition of the failure of Rashdall's type of approach, that there has emerged what I believe can be referred to as a third general view of grace. Its representative as far as this study is concerned was John Oman, and it is for that reason that I consider him the most significant and influential of the theologians studied. As we saw grace here is characterised as persuasion, and it is seen as coming through the whole natural order. This view shares features with the other views, but arises partly from the weaknesses, real and supposed, found in them. It also has characteristics of its own such that it can be seen as a radically different approach.

In a polemical sense it is a reaction against the conception of grace which Oman refers to as 'omnipotence directed in a straight line by omniscience'. Whether grace was seen in terms of will and the establishing of a relationship, or of spirit and the overcoming of taint, it had become possible to speak of it as some kind of force which could be in conflict with man and somehow over-rule him. The long arguments from Augustine and Pelagius onward had established the priority of the divine initiative. But the idea of man being over-ruled, even by God, was not a welcome one to Liberal Protestants.

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1. There was also the idea, which we shall take up later, that fresh Bible study had shown the 'orthodox' ideas to be false.

There is not sufficient material available to permit much discussion of any other 'means of grace'. We have noted the high regard he has for the community of believers and its traditions. It is within this community that the 'story' of Jesus is passed on, and the sacraments are administered, thus calling others into the experience of the 'paradox of grace' and enabling them to enter the benefits of the work of Christ. The Bible he sees has authority because of its historical nearness to the incarnation. "It represents the inner circle of witnesses to that episode. Not, of course, merely in the sense of historical eye-witnesses, but also in the sense of witnesses to the meaning of Christ, ... since our eyes never looked upon Jesus in the flesh, we are ultimately dependent on the testimony of those who were eye-witnesses, and that is what is behind the New Testament." (ibid p 57). The Old Testament would presumably be valued as the witness to earlier experiences of God, and as the scripture of the first Christian church. We saw his appreciation of the Psalms as conveying to later readers the personal faith and experience of those who first wrote and used them. As far as 'orders' are concerned, he denies any 'pipe-line' theory, but argues that the sacraments which point back to the incarnation "... can only be celebrated in the redeemed community which it created, and only by those who within that community have been set apart in a succession which connects us through the ages with the origins of our religion." (ibid p 66).

Several criticisms of his thought have been made in passing. The nature of the material available makes more general criticisms difficult, since there are some questions which he does not raise or to which he alludes briefly as adjuncts to other discussions. His treatment of sin is perhaps the most important of these for our present purposes. He treats it eloquently and at length as man's inability, without divine grace, to do what he ought to do. The nearest he gets to a definition is to see it as man's inherent self-centredness.[1] But he seems to pay no attention at all to the concept of sin as a 'racial' entity, and little to the element of rebellion. Thus we do not find the idea of the solidarity of the human race in

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1. cf 'God was in Christ' p 204f

culpable rebellion against God. As N.H.G. Robinson has noted, it is not clear whether his ideas of 'enabling grace' would be strong enough to deal with these concepts.[1] Yet it could not be said that the concept of racial sin is denied. The situation is of a piece with his selective approach to the interpretations of the doctrine of the atonement which, as we saw, enabled him to omit certain important emphases.

On a more positive note we referred at the beginning to his mediating position. At the time he was writing this showed considerable independence of judgement. He refused to be stampeded by the reaction against Liberal Protestantism, or to accept the sort of polarising of the options which was sometimes associated with 'Barthianism', and later with the demythologising programme of Bultmann with its exclusive concentration on the cross as the one great eschatological moment in history. Thus he keeps both the importance of the historic facts, open to criticism, and the importance of the decision of faith. His appeal to moral conviction might be criticised by later theologians and philosophers. Yet, as we saw, he put it with careful qualifications and came to see its limitations. It is hard to believe that at the bottom of this he is not appealing to something which is true about man as created by God and as a recipient of grace.

Perhaps his greatest strength and the chief feature of his theology is in his use of the paradoxes of religion, summed up in the 'paradox of grace'. The variation in his understanding of paradox, to which we drew attention, perhaps weakened its effectiveness as a theological tool. It might further be argued that he is only dealing with one type of religious experience. In spite of his obvious sympathy towards Catholic theology and several quotations from Eastern Orthodox sources, his thinking, and probably his own experience, remained on the moral rather than the mystical side of Christianity. Nevertheless, on that side, the sensitivity which he shows towards deep personal experience gives his work considerable religious strength.

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1. op cit p 257 n

VIII CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study has been to consider the work of certain representative British theologians of the first half of this century chiefly through an examination of their treatment of that group of questions which cluster around the central subject of grace. In this conclusion I shall not attempt to arrive at solutions to these questions from which one could say that certain positions are 'right' while others are 'wrong'. I intend rather to show a drift which I believe is discernible in the theologians studied, which is related to wider theological movements, and which has continued to the present.

It is widely accepted that the most significant theological movement of the period was the so-called 'neo-orthodox' revival associated with the work of Karl Barth. Very broadly speaking this movement developed from certain inadequacies in Liberal Protestantism and seemed for a time to have totally discredited Liberalism as a theological force. More recently, probably as I have suggested before the death of Baillie and certainly since, 'Barthianism' has itself lost ground. It has been replaced by a new and different Liberalism which yet has close family resemblances to that in vogue before 1914. At the same time there has been a move away from the once fashionable stress on the 'Word of God', first to a greater interest in the church, and more recently to what might be called a broader sacramentalism undergirded by ideas such as that of a sacramental universe. I am aware that what is often called 'Barthianism' in England, and what is therefore intended in this outline, may not be very closely related to the work of Barth himself; that some have argued that Barth has rarely been properly read and understood in this country; and that the apparent rise and fall of 'Barthianism' may to some extent be traced to non-theological factors. Nevertheless the broad outline, I think, remains.

In relation to the subject of this work I believe that, as well as this general movement in theological method and outlook, one must also consider the existence of two broad approaches to the subject of

grace - the Protestant and the Catholic - from which there seems recently to have emerged a third. I am conscious that I have on several occasions, and particularly in relation to the work of Quick, drawn attention to the danger of analysing and labelling different theological 'schools'. I am aware of that danger now, and in offering outlines of Protestant and Catholic approaches to the subject I do not suggest that these exist as water-tight compartments, or that it is not possible for one person to see the value of both sides. Indeed I would want to assert that often a Protestant thinker does give weight to a typically Catholic stress, and vice versa, though it is usually a different weight and often with a different terminology. But it is wrong, I believe, to go to the opposite extreme and say that all apparent differences are terminological and that there are no basic divisions. If these qualifications are accepted it can be helpful to have outlines of different possible approaches as generalisations and it is easiest to distinguish between the Protestant, or soteriological, approach, on the one hand, and the Catholic, or ecclesiological, one on the other.

The Protestant moves most naturally in the moral realm with a stress on the human will. In this tradition grace is predominantly a proclamation of forgiveness for the rebellious will, a forgiveness which is received in an intensely personal way. The epitome of the Christian life is found in the experience of conversion. It need not be a particularly sudden instantaneous event and is certainly not, at least in the majority of cases, totally unprepared for. Yet there is a distinct element of discontinuity, a sense that God has intervened. The picture is of a will which has been 'at odds' with God, either in straightforward rebellion, or in an attempt to come to terms with God through works in such a way that man has a claim against God. Then, with the experience of grace as forgiveness, comes the consciousness of release from guilt, relief from the necessity of struggling for self-justification before God, and an overwhelming sense of gratitude with a consciousness that all is of God and that man's only response is faith.

It should not be necessary to say that faith here is not mere intellectual belief but personal commitment. It is more fiducia

than assensus, though it must have cognitive implications as the commitment is based on the conviction that God is true to his word.[1] It is a misunderstanding of the Protestant position so to state faith that it becomes a kind of work. For this tradition there is a distinct contrast between grace and works.

The forgiveness which is thus proclaimed and received is made possible by the objective act of God in Christ. The sin which stood between God and man has been dealt with and thus removed, it has not simply been overlooked. Thus for this way of thinking there is a heavy concentration on the actual death of Christ. It is an objective act outside of us by which we are benefitted. The easiest ways of explaining this are through legal metaphors, ideas of substitution and propitiation. The chief stress is on what God has done in Christ 'for us', in contrast to the more Catholic stress of what Christ does 'in us'.

However it would be misleading to over-emphasise these more objective elements - and here we see the dangers of over-analysis mentioned above - for the Protestant also stresses sanctification. Phrases such as 'to receive Christ' or 'to let Christ into the heart' are characteristic of the most extreme Protestant piety. The truth is that the Protestant does not really distinguish between an imputed and an imparted righteousness in terms of actual Christian living. He certainly insists that the sinner is declared righteous in virtue of the death of Christ and the righteousness of Christ which is imputed to him. But there is no suggestion that the new convert should then, as it were, stop to consider the next step. The process of sanctification inevitably follows and in this process righteousness is imparted to the Christian. Ideally at least it should be possible to speak of progress in sanctification, but, and here is the distinction from some forms of catholicism, such sanctification or imparted righteousness never becomes the basis of his position before God.

Enough has already been said of the possible weaknesses of this

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1. The classical expression of the Protestant view of faith is found in Calvin: Institutes 3:2:1-7.

position. It can stress the death of Christ to the exclusion of his life. It can be stated in excessively external ways. It tends to individualism and a minimising or ignoring of the corporate element in Christianity. The natural stress on the Word of pardon leads to a great stress on preaching, so that the church can become merely a gathering to hear the word of God, and that alone. The sacraments become acted sermons and there is a loss of the mystical element. But these are possible dangers of this approach, they need not be inevitably associated with it. Furthermore the great strengths, and the considerable New Testament support of the position, should not be overlooked. The Reformers saw this as the basic New Testament view of the faith which they believed had been overladen with error.

The typical Catholic position can also be put in general terms. Here the stress is on the activity of the spirit of God. There is a different basic view of sin, and the Catholic works with a different contrast. Here sin is seen less as rebellion and more as impurity or taint. It is not a matter of a wrong choice, or a series of wrong choices, but more of a corrupt nature. This cannot simply be identified with the Protestant conception of a rebellious will, though some would say that it can include it. But the chief feature is that here there is a contrast between grace and nature, rather than grace and works. Grace is now seen as that which raises the whole of life to a supernatural level. In traditional terms it moves it back towards its pre-fallen state and brings a little nearer the possibility for man of choosing that glorious future which was always God's plan for him. Grace is thus seen in terms of spirit, and the reception of grace is not the acceptance of a proclamation of forgiveness with a consequent redirection of the will, but the reception of a spiritual power which is able to deal with the corruption of man's nature.

The different framework in which the Catholic Christian interprets grace leads to different expectations of religious experience and a different 'tone' of Christian life. There is less of an expectation of a once-for-all experience, but there might be continuing, and ever deepening, appreciation of personal sinfulness and a desire to attain to a state of sanctification or release from sin. The power for this sanctification is likely to be found through a 'high'

view of the church and especially the sacraments. The church is now the spirit filled community, and the sacraments are the means by which grace is experienced. Such experience may be expected to lead to a new habitus as, through no merit of his own but purely through grace, the process of sanctification progressively fits the believer for fuller worship of God by a transformation of his corrupt nature.[1]

Now we see the other side of the Protestant emphases mentioned above. Instead of a stress on the once-for-all objective act of the cross, there is a fuller appreciation of the whole life of Christ as the means of salvation, often, especially in the period under review, accompanied by ideas of a broadly 'Christus Victor' type of thinking about the atonement. Instead of the stress on what Christ has done 'for us', there is the continuing stress on what Christ continues to do 'in us'. Furthermore this general approach can deal far more easily with ethics. The Protestant Christian tends to find ethical demands embarrassing since they are inclined either to come from an imitation of Christ, which reminds him of inadequate views of atonement, or from attempts to obey the law, which he is apt to dismiss as 'works-righteousness'.

But this view too has its dangers. It can be asked whether it really does justice to the Biblical view of sin as rebellion and breach of relationship, or whether it is simply concentrating on the effects of sin rather than its root cause. More important is the danger that it will move from the 'dynamic' view of the relation of God and man found in the New Testament to adopt a more 'substantial' view. For such a view the uniqueness of the work of Christ and the proclamation of pardon must almost inevitably be dulled. This is seen at its extreme when substance thinking is applied to the eucharist and grace is seen as a kind of 'stuff'. Though, once more, it must be emphasised that these are only possible dangers.

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1. If this outline of the Catholic position is broadly correct there should be no surprise about the participation of Catholics in the current charismatic revival. While Protestants discover an element which has largely been absent from their faith, Catholics merely experience an awakening of what has always been present, though often dormant, in theirs.

The contrast between the two views can be brought out by their different views of man, coming from different understandings of the image of God. The Protestant view is 'relational'. Man is constituted by his answerability to God, that is in terms of his will to hear or to refuse to hear, to obey or to refuse to obey, God's word. He can only rightly be a man in his relation to God, and could he ever be completely outside this relationship he would cease to be a man.[1] The problem then arises of what can one say about those who refuse this relationship? Is the relationship such that even in their refusal to listen or obey they are yet related to God, or is such a definite, wilful, disobedience possible that one must say that some cease to be truly human?

The Catholic view can deal with this problem by saying that man continues to exist outside the relationship with God by virtue of some 'substance' in his being. In fact his being is substantiated. The relational aspect is not ignored, it is still asserted that man is out of his proper relationship with God, but the question has changed, it now becomes how to restore man to that relationship. In other words attention has moved from what man <u>is</u> to what he must <u>do</u>. This gives stability to man's being at the expense of seeing him as sharing the being of God. But the Biblical view is that man does not share being with God, he rather derives being from God. The result of substantiating man is that grace is also substantiated, the way is now open for separate 'graces' as <u>donna superaddita</u>, one substance is added to another. A second result is the introduction of the contrast that we have already seen between grace and nature. The Thomistic dictum that 'grace does not destroy nature but completes it' overcomes this contrast. But it is a contrast that the Protestant would not allow in the first place, since he sees grace and nature as different in quality, and argues that the true Biblical contrast is grace and works.[2]

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1. An illustration of this Protestant line from an unusual source is found in G.K. Chesterton who begins one of his short stories with the words "A man and an atheist were standing on a doorstep.." I have not been able to trace the exact source of this.

2. The argument of the last two paragraphs is heavily indebted to J.K.S. Reid: '<u>Our Life in Christ</u>' chap 2. Where I have stopped short with the implication that the existence of a man who refuses his relationship with God is nevertheless still constituted by

The way forward seemed to lie with a view which acknowledged God's activity throughout the whole of creation, and which analysed it by the use of personal terms.[1]

Basically this approach is the appeal to a general religious apprehension, a numinous sense, or a consciousness that there is 'something more' to man's experience of the world, and particularly of other people. In modern terminology this is described as an experience 'in depth'. When analysed it appears as an intuition of some basal unity undergirding the universe and our experience of it. H.D. Lewis has argued that reflection on our experience of the universe in such moments of insight seems to bring us to a point "... where the universe displays some unity of a 'supra-rational' character whose mystery we can never reduce." (Our Experience of God p 40). Those who argue in this way are keen to point out that the things and people experienced are the same for the believer as for the non-believer, but the believer 'sees more' in them, he experiences them 'in depth'.[2] For Oman this was expressed as that experience of the Supernatural through the natural which is always open to those who will have it.

Thus for this approach grace is always present. It comes in experiences of 'a power not ourselves which makes for righteousness' potentially open to all. There is here a bringing together of the ideas of revelation and grace. This, I believe, is perfectly reasonable in itself, since revelation and grace may be considered as the formal and material aspects of the same conception. The question must arise, however, whether this very general approach is an adequate treatment of revelation.

In the early part of this century such an approach had the apologetic advantage of being a protest against a too aggressive scientific attitude. Against the cold matter of fact approach

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1. The basic texts seem to have been R. Otto: 'The Idea of the Holy' and M. Buber 'I and Thou'
2. cf "The Believer finds in the most familiar experiences of life a meaning and a presence which the unbeliever does not find in them;..." John Baillie: 'Our Knowledge of God' p 53.

which seemed to be scientific such an attitude to the world took account of the more than matter of fact feelings of which most people are inarticulately aware, and restored some air of mystery, or even divinity, to the universe. More recently its apologetic value is that is can allow for a good deal of secularism and, particularly when stated in existentialist terms, it can find in a basically immanental view of God the experiences which were previously associated with an experience of transcendence.[1] Thus, paradoxically, one is urged to experience transcendence 'in depth'. Not the least of its virtues is that it is an appeal to a general not a specific experience, that is one which is at least potentially open to all, and it thus enables the Christian to account for the genuine religious experiences found in non-Christian religions or philosophies.

This type of approach seems to have affected in some measure most theology for the last fifty years at least, and its influence is apparent in Quick and Donald Baillie. Of the two views previously mentioned it is clearly nearest to the Catholic, and it is perhaps best seen as a weakened and extended Catholicism. It has clear affinities with the tradition of Logos theology, and can appeal naturally to sacramentalism, especially if the sacraments are set against a background of a sacramental universe - a line taken in different ways by both Quick and Baillie. But the approach has certain obvious weaknesses. The chief of these, which I mentioned in criticism of Oman,[2] is that there seems to be no good reason why the experience, or sense of transcendence 'in depth', should be interpreted in a Christian way at all.

A particular example of this difficulty is provided, at a later period, by the differences between R.W. Hepburn and H.D. Lewis. Hepburn in '<u>Christianity and Paradox</u>' (1958), argued that what is generally taken to be a religious experience or sense of the numinous

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1. A <u>reductio ad absurdum</u> argument against this approach is provided by A. Kee's suggestion that it is possible to speak of experience of transcendence in purely secular terms, appealing to Jesus but discarding belief in God. cf '<u>The Way of Transcendence</u>' (1971)
2. cf <u>supra</u> p 174.

is open to non-believers, and that it is possible for the non-believer to retain a 'religious orientation of mind'. He is saying in effect that one can have the experience without being forced to adopt the Christian interpretation of it. Lewis, whose book '<u>Our Experience of God</u>' (1959) begins from an awareness of the Supernatural very similar to Oman's, is naturally not happy with this, though he recognises its force. However in answer to it he can only say that Hepburn has got the experience wrong, or at least has wrongly interpreted it. The experience itself, Lewis claims, is not neutral. To say that it is "... is only possible if we exclude what is vital in this experience. It is not any impression of awe or 'quite inexpressible strangeness' which constitutes the sense of the holy ... (it) ... is the peculiarly religious one of finding God in some way present in the world, and whatever further interpretation may be in order here it is certainly not one which leaves it open whether God exists or not." (<u>op cit</u> p 102)[1] This hardly seems a fair argument, and in any case tends to undermine Lewis's, and Oman's, entire position which seems to depend on the experience being, in principle at least, universal. My own opinion is that we have in Lewis the position which is implied in Oman, and that it is not possible to distinguish it from an avowedly non-Christian religious position such as Hepburns.[2]

Exponents of the view under discussion though they begin with something like Oman's 'Supernatural realm' go on most naturally to speak of 'God', and to use personal terms.[3] In doing so it seems that they are taking much more from what they tend to call 'special revelation' than they always allow. There is the further problem

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1. This is remarkably similar to Oman's attempt to distinguish the 'sacred Holy' from the 'undifferentiated Holy' (cf <u>supra</u> p 137). Lewis's treatment of Hepburn is similar to Oman's of Otto (cf <u>The Natural and the Supernatural</u> p 471ff. <u>J.T.S</u>. Vol XXV pp 275-286).
2. An alternative position would be that of John Baillie, who suggests that many who consider themselves atheists are <u>really</u> Christians (cf <u>Our Knowledge of God</u> p 52f).
3. cf "... it is always intriguing to look out for the first appearance of the personal pronoun. It is not difficult to describe reality as we experience it in some unified way. Nor is it difficult to apply to it the term 'God', ... the trick is to establish continuity in usage between the normal use of the word 'God' and the new use. This theological sleight of hand is regularly exposed by the sudden appearance of the pronoun 'he' to describe a reality which hitherto has been described as 'it'." (A. Kee <u>op cit</u> p 42).

that on their terms it becomes increasingly difficult to separate God from his creation,[1] or to give anything like the traditional role to Jesus. Here it is interesting to note the difference between Oman and Baillie. Oman, as I argued above, sees Jesus chiefly as the supreme prophet. Baillie, having begun from a similar position, develops the way of thinking which I have suggested could be illustrated by the figure of concentric circles in which there is, as it were, a greater concentration of grace in Jesus.[2] In this way an attempt is made to preserve the uniqueness of Jesus, though, again as I mentioned above, it is still not clear whether he is still just the great recipient of grace or whether he can be seen as the great bearer and source of grace.[3]

Finally this general approach seems to have an inadequate view of sin and forgiveness. If grace is persuasion, and if it is open to man to 'see' it merely by what might be termed a different way of looking at the world, then it appears possible for man simply to decide to allow himself to be persuaded. The power of sin, whether in the Protestant sense of a radical rebellion, or in the Catholic sense of a disabling taint, is lost. Sin thus becomes mere weakness in need of strength, or intellectual dullness in need of enlightenment. And the way to such strength or enlightenment does not seem difficult to find. Gone is the aweful fear of the Lord and the Protestant's deep psychological experience of repentance. Gone too is the sense of God's aweful holiness and the Catholic's conviction of personal unworthiness and impurity. One feels that this line of approach has not yet considered how serious a thing sin is.

It is perhaps to be expected from this that the conception of forgiveness is also weakened. Man is assured of the goodness of the 'Supernatural realm' and its (or his) kindness towards him. It is merely asked that man should 'fit in' with it, that he recognise the availability of grace and know that he is 'accepted'. It is not easy

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1. Some of the difficulties involved here are set out, in the complex form of a dialogue, in Austin Farrer's '<u>Faith and Speculation</u>' (1967) chaps X and XI
2. cf <u>supra</u> p 229f
3. cf <u>supra</u> p 250f

to ally this with traditional ideas of forgiveness, largely because it is not sufficiently personal, though personal language is used. Forgiveness seems to demand that there is one who forgives as well as one who is forgiven. As we have seen, particularly from Denney and Baillie, there is usually an element of cost to be borne by the forgiver and the result is restored personal intimacy. But can one be forgiven in any meaningful sense by the 'Supernatural realm', or the 'Ground of being'? Furthermore, in traditional terms, while the sinner himself is forgiven and accepted, the sin is not so much accepted as dealt with. Traditional ideas of atonement include some element of reparation. The view of grace being discussed allows that the consequences of sin may continue. This keeps to some extent the idea that the forgiven man is both justified and a sinner, and thus suffers for his sins, but it omits the traditional note of some final act of God outside of man. It does not, in Forsyth's fine phrase, 'settle in a final way the issue between a holy God and the sin of man'. It is this complex of ideas - the personal element of forgiveness, the note of reparation, and the note of finality - which is kept, with whatever complication in its expression, by the traditional formulations.

The view which comes to such clear expression in Oman has continued, with variations, much beyond the period covered by this study. Yet this was not the only significant movement. There was also, as we have noted on several occasions, a movement back to the Bible. For our purposes the most significant elements of this were the re-discovery of the Biblical idea of sacrifice, accompanied by a move away from ideas of propitiation which had been, often rather unthinkingly, read in to the sacrificial language. These ideas seemed to indicate a movement away from the idea of Jesus as our substitute toward that of Jesus as our representative.[1] This had the advantage of bringing his whole life into consideration and often lead to Christus Victor type of thinking on the atonement even when that phrase was not used.

We saw, particularly in dealing with Quick, the move away from

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1. Two most influential works were F.C.N. Hicks: '<u>The Fullness of Sacrifice</u>' (1930), and V. Taylor: '<u>Jesus and His Sacrifice</u>' (1937).

substitutionary and propitiatory ideas of sacrifice. It was pointed out that the Old Testament knew several different types of sacrifice, that even when they dealt with sin they only covered ceremonial sins, and that they chiefly embodied the idea of the worshipper's offering of himself to God. The laying of the worshippers hands on the head of the victim symbolises identification with the purity of the offering, not a transfer of sins. Indeed, it was frequently pointed out that the only animal on which sins were laid - the scapegoat on the Day of Atonement - was not in fact sacrificed. More positively, in regard to sacrifice and over a wider field of Old Testament studies, more attention was paid to the idea of representation and corporate personality, and the possibility of seeing Jesus as the representative man was explored.

A most influential piece of work in all this was C.H. Dodd's investigation of the ἱλάσκεσθαι group of words.[1] These words in the New Testament (Rom 3:25. 1 John 2:2, 4:10), had been taken to imply propitiation and interpreted in terms of propitiatory sacrifice, with Jesus seen as a substitute suffering in man's place to turn away the wrath of God. Dodd argued that though the propitiatory idea was the common one in pagan usage it could not apply to Judaism. There Yahweh had provided the sacrificial cultus and, quite apart from the view of God which propitiation seemed to imply, it seemed illogical that God should, as it were, appear on both sides of the equation at once, providing the propitiation to turn away his own wrath. Instead, Dodd argued, the basic idea should be a covering or expiation of sin. Thus God is seen as providing the means of dealing with that defilement which separates man from himself. This line of argument seems to have been accepted almost with relief. As we have seen both Quick and Baillie accept it without question. But it has not been universally accepted, and it is probable that propitiation should not so easily be bowed off the stage.[2]

Equally important, and, I would think, of more lasting value,

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1. J.T.S. Vol XXXII pp 352-360. also 'The Bible and The Greeks' (1935) pp 82-95.
2. cf L. Morris: 'The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross' (1955) chaps IV and V. and D. Hill 'Greek Words and Hebrew Meanings' (1967). pp 23-48. Though Hill is less happy about a cultic background of 'propitiation' and prefers to find it in 4 Macc. 17:22.

was the re-discovery that the chief point of sacrifice was the release of life, not just the death of the victim. The pure life, acceptable to God, was released and made available to the worshipper. He, in some way, participated in it and thus offered himself to God. The implications of this for interpreting the death of Jesus are clear, and are particularly clearly stated by Quick. The life released is made available to man, or man participates in it, through the sacraments.

This is perhaps the best expression of atonement and grace to be found during the period. But there are various ways in which it might be put. In the form in which Quick states it it has close similarities with what I have described as the third general view of grace. This seems to come about largely because Quick seems to begin his thinking from ideas of worship, and particularly from the eucharist. Furthermore, as we have noted, he begins from the background idea of the sacramental universe. In other words there is a tendency to link sacraments with creation rather than redemption. This seems to be borne out by his reluctance to consider the historical details of the institution of the eucharist. Deeply rooted himself in the Catholic tradition and conscious, as we saw, of the vitium of sin, when he turns to the means of grace his apparent indifference to history seems to betray him. He probably did not fully reckon with the possibility that this attitude could detract from the centrality of Jesus. In this respect Baillie, who is in many ways similar to Quick in his treatment of the sacraments, has corrected him. Baillie specifically links sacraments with Jesus, they are not just taken from a sacramental universe.

We must further add that, if it is to be accepted as giving the best expression of ideas of atonement and grace, the sacrificial model must be extended to include other ideas. I consider that Denney has established the centrality of substitution in some form. We noted too that Dodd's attempt to remove ideas of propitiation totally did not convince all; and that the 'penal' idea should also be kept.

It seems probable that the description of sacrifice given by

Quick is far too pure and idealistic. While it may be accepted that the animal victim was not punished as a substitute, it seems equally clear that it nevertheless was a substitute in that it represented the pure offering which the worshipper should have given. Furthermore it is likely that most worshippers would think, at least partly, of propitiation. In contrasting sacrificial and substitutionary views of atonement it is false to concentrate simply on the death of Jesus. At its best the substitutionary idea indicates that his whole life, including his death, was a substitute. It was given by God just as the sacrificial cultus was. As a substitute he lived a human life and endured, by God's appointment, the 'penal' suffering of death. In that he has died as a substitute the believer's death is not of the same quality. The believer dies as one who is in the continuous process of sharing the risen life of Christ, which may be seen as the sacrificial life released by death. The believer remains of course '<u>simul justus et peccator</u>', but he is seen now 'in Christ', his death is not therefore as it would have been.

Put in this way substitutionary thinking can take up and express the ideas linked with the sacrificial view. Then justice is also done to the legal thinking and the note of finality found in the New Testament. It might be possible then to reverse Quick's approach and to see the substitutionary, or as he would say juridical, model including the best ideas of the sacrificial one.

Finally, Baillie's most important contribution to the discussion is his use of the paradox of grace. I have suggested that it might not be such a good starting point for the understanding of the person of Jesus as Baillie thought, but in its own sphere, as a description of the believer's experience of grace, it is most helpful. Where Quick with his Catholic background has the danger of falling into substance thinking, Baillie working with the category of will avoids that danger. But he also seems to get beyond Oman's treatment of the apparent conflict between grace and freedom. Oman states the traditional impasse "... the greater the preponderance of the will that aids, the more destructive it must be for the will that is aided." (<u>Vision and Authority</u> p 115). For Oman therefore the only release from this problem is to reduce the divine will to 'persuasion'.

Baillie was able to go beyond this. He saw that in actual Christian experience there was no sense of any destruction of the human will but rather a completion or fulfilment. He indicates that there need be no conflict but rather a different understanding of freedom. That the believer may glimpse - and it may be that in this life there is never more than a glimpse - a region of experience beyond what we normally call freedom. A region of experience in which man is set free by God to will the will of God, and in the performance of it to find his fulfilment. To know this is to be 'in Christ' and to experience the grace of Christ.