THE DOCTRINE OF ATONEMENT IN COLERIDGE AND MAURICE

C.W.INGLIS WARDROP, M.A.
BIGGAR.

THESIS FOR DEGREE OF PH.D.
UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH.

Degree conferred 16th December 1932.

PREFACE.

What is here submitted is a revised form of the Thesis, considerably altered and recast. In its original form the Thesis was not found acceptable by the Examiners, but I was allowed the opportunity of re-submitting it and various suggestions were kindly given to me as to the lines on which I might proceed in revising the work. In the present Thesis the endeavour has been made as far as possible to carry out these suggestions: the result being that the sections of the work dealing with the views of the two writers, Coleridge and Maurice, have been considerably shortened and condensed, while the exposition of the view I desire to advocate has been expanded and the arguments I have to bring forward in support of that view more fully detailed. I have here given a much fuller account of the Patristic theory of "Ransom", and of Anselm's famous Refutation of it. I have also brought out more clearly the Affinity of the two English theologians with the Patristic view, and their distinction from the purely Subjective theory of Abelard.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPENDICES.

A. The Atonement a Living Issue.

B. Aim of this Thesis.

C. The "Ransom to the Devil".

D. Summary of Theories.

E. Kant - The "Self Legislative Will".

F. Coleridge, Kant, Jacobi.

G. Further point of contact - Rationalising.
Note on Epistemology - Descartes' Error.

H. Divine Causality - Divine Impassibility.

I. On The Devil.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

Principal Books read or consulted in connection with the Thesis.

COLERIDGE'S WORKS. Especially - Aids to Reflection, Biographia Literaria, Table Talk, The Friend.

MAURICE'S WORKS. Especially - Life and Letters, Doct.of Sacrifice, Theol.Essays, Kingdom of Christ.

GREGORY OF NYSSA: Oratio Catechetica Magna.
(Engl.Trans.of Wace and Schaff, in "Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers". Oxford.1893.)

ANSELM: CUR DEUS HOMO.(Latin Text,Published by Williams & Norgate.1863.- Engl.Trans.by E.C.PROUT, "Christian Classics Series").

KANT: Critiques of Pure and Practical Reason, Engl.Trans.

"Religion innerhalb der Gränzen der reinen Vernunft"
(German Text.1793.Ed.by Karl Kehrbach, 1878. Semple's Engl.Trans.)

NEW TESTAMENT and PAULINISM.

HISTORY OF ATONEMENT DOCTRINE: Dorner, Pfleiderer, Harnack, Franks, Storr, Tulloch, J.K.Mozley.

WORKS ON ATONEMENT DOCTRINE: McLeod Campbell, Dale, Bushnell, Moberly, Denney, Mackintosh,etc. Rashdall-"Idea of Atonement."

ARTICLES in Bible Dictionaries.

INTRODUCTION.

THE PURPOSE of this Thesis is to advocate a return to a pre-Anselmic conception of Atonement theory, and to make an appeal for renewed attention to the Patristic idea of a "Ransom". The Death of Christ is a Ransom - a Price - which God has to pay for the redemption of men. (see Appendix A.)

I do not profess to put forward any new discovery in this fully excavated - even over excavated - field of Atonement controversy, every inch of which has been examined and re-examined with a minuteness which itself speaks for the importance of the subject and its vital concern to the human heart; but it is the fact that with Anselm there came a radical change of emphasis which has more or less coloured the treatment of the doctrine ever since, and has - as I have been forced to think - introduced a certain obsession or prejudice, a certain biassed point of view that has been too readily accepted in dealing with the Atonement. Anselm gave the death blow to the theory of a "Ransom to the Devil" which prevailed before his time. That theory has never really raised its head again. It has in most books on the Atonement been exhumed for a moment only to be battered with fresh blows and flung into the grave again with renewed contumely. "That hideous theory", Rashdall calls it,- "the coarse mythology of the Ransom theory". And he says, "Never in the whole history of Christian thought has a doctrine been so decidedly destroyed by criticism and more universally abandoned".(Ideas and Ideals.I58)

I venture to think it is just this universal abandonment of it, this utter refusal to look at what it means and to make use of

the principle underlying it that has introduced into the doctrine and retained in the doctrine a sense of obscurity and mystery which need not be there. As an act of God, and an outcome of God's nature and character, the Atonement is naturally mysterious. Like all the greatest things it ultimately - exit in mysterium. But apart from the welcome grandeur of this inevitable and awe-inspiring mystery, one feels - in reading the history of the doctrine up to the present time, in tracing the efforts of the greatest writers to find an explanation of the fact - one cannot resist the impression that there is a difficulty which ought to yield, there is a sense of baffled effort, to some extent there is the feeling of a key lost, a missing element that, were it found, would illumine a dark region.

I am bold enough to suggest that the lost key, the desired source of illumination, may be found, - not indeed in a re-habilitation of the "Ransom to the Devil" theory as it stood in the ancient writers - this no one would dream of attempting in these days - but in a fresh investigation of the essential principle of which that despised theory was the mythological embodiment. I do claim that the total neglect of that principle has helped to make the one supreme question, the main problem of the Atonement - namely, the actual necessity for Christ's death - more obscure and baffling than it ought to be. (See Appendix B)

There are four main types of theory regarding the Atonement, two of which may be said to divide the field between them at the present day.

(I) First there is the "Satisfaction" theory which, since the

time when it received such notable expression in the magnificent system of Anselm, has stood under a great variety of forms - as the orthodox, official explanation of Christ's death, right on through the Scholastic and Reformation periods up to the present time, and may be said to express the view held by most of the evangelical writers and preachers of the age.

(2) Secondly, there is the Subjective, "Moral Influence" theory, first put forward conspicuously by Abelard in the twelfth century and revived by several thinkers in recent times. It has attracted a number of "modern" minds among theologians, Dean Rashdall being its most notable present day exponent.

The principal modern explanations of the Atonement will be found to conform to one or other of these two types.

(3) A third theory, which was adumbrated first prehaps by Irenaeus, and which has appeared from time to time not generally as a separate theory but rather as an element in some form of the Satisfaction theory, is seen in the idea of "Recapitulation" or "Representation", the idea that Christ in His atoning death is acting not as an individual but as the representative or as the actual inclusive summing up of humanity. This view has often crept in as a sort of explanatory or supplementary element to ease the difficulty that was felt to attach to some forms of the Satisfaction theory.

Possibly Ritschl, with his thought of Christ's priestly sacrifice in fulfilment of His Vocation, a sacrifice first for Himself and then for His brethren, may fit in as a modern representative of this "Representation" theory better than of any other.

(4) The fourth main type of theory is found in the Patristic

conception that Christ's death is a Ransom to the Devil. This is the view that I would bring forward for fresh investigation in the hope that it may be found to yield fruitful results. (Appendix C.)

My reason for basing this work on the views of these two English theologians, Coleridge and Maurice, is not by any means that they can be claimed as adherents of the ancient Patristic theory. Neither of them, I imagine, would be in the least willing to acknowledge such a claim. I know of no modern adherent of the theory, nor indeed of any modern writer whatever who mentions it at all except to scout it as a long exploded myth, or at best to regard it as a theory that "became involved in conceptions curiously impossible for us", as Denney says.(Doct.of Sacrifice.p.31)

Note:- Denney here, in his remarks on the Ransom theory in the course of his historical sketch of the doctrine, seems fully to recognise the value of the principle underlying the Ransom theory, but apparently forgets this afterwards or at least fails to seek any guidance or help from it in his own wrestling with the problem.

But in studying the two English writers mentioned I became more and more convinced of the need for calling in the aid of such a principle as this theory embodies, as essential to the explanation of the Atonement. The profound sense of the reality and power of evil which both these writers exhibit in all their teaching on Redemption; Coleridge's very striking and original view of "original sin"; Maurice's emphatic and repeated insistance on the great idea that all sacrifice proceeds from God, that the whole sacrifice is made by God and that our sacrifice to Him is but an expression of our trust in His sacrifice for us: such things among others helped to confirm the view I have long held that the

ancient explanation of Christ's Atonement as a "Ransom" must be, of all theories, nearest to the truth.

The attempt is sometimes made, in one way or other, to evade or get round about the actual point of the problem in treating of the Atonement.

For example, the thought is often suggested that in this whole question of Redemption and the Atonement made by Christ, what really matters and what really is indubitable is the fact of it. Theory is irrelevant. No agreement will ever be found as to the meaning and explanation of the fact. There are many (with Butler, for example) who would profess a general scepticism as to the possibility of reaching any kind of satisfying rationale of the atoning act. Factum est. That is all we can say. It is a fact. The Cross has proved historically to be the "power of God unto salvation", the supreme and only real power of spiritual uplift and regeneration; but the explanation of this fact, the true theory of it, is for ever beyond our grasp.

Now this is an idea that must be entirely rejected. We must have - or at least must never cease striving to have - some satisfactory thought in our mind as to its meaning if we are to do justice to the fact; and it has been very effectually shown, by Denney and others in dealing with this view, that a fact in which there is no theory is a fact in which we can see no meaning. Theorising on the Atonement requires no apology or justification for it is inevitable.

Again, there is the view - pretty commonly held - that all theories of the Atonement are true so far as they go, but no one

of them is adequate, not all of them together are adequate, as a full explanation of the fact. Dr.Orr for example gives expression to this thought: "Gathering together all the various aspects of Christ's work which have been brought before us, we see, I think, the truth of the remark ——— that the true or full view of Christ's work in redemption is wide enough to include them all - takes up the elements of truth in every one of them".(Christ.View. p.365)

This of course is entirely true. The fact is far greater than any theory of the fact, and there are elements of truth in every theory ever put forward. But simply to say, as has sometimes been said, that there is truth in all theories - and to leave the matter there - to advance this as a plea for exemption from further theorising, is simply to say that there is truth in no theory. This vague attitude will never be satisfying. There must be one theory above all others in which the mind can rest as being the actual truth of the matter. Or at least the attempt must be made and be continuously pursued to find such a theory.

Finally, there is the view put forward by many - perhaps by most modern writers - that the Death of Christ in relation to the Atonement is not to be regarded as anything more than the natural consequence of the Life He lived. It was the inevitable outcome of the kind of life Christ gave Himself to and of His fidelity to the truth. The idea here is that, traditionally, too much has been made of the Death, the Cross, the Blood. It is in the whole phenomenon of the Christ (it is said), His Incarnation, His Life and Work and Teaching - as well as in His Death - that the Atonement consists.

This attitude is quite intelligible. Its appeal to the modern mind is obvious, as helping towards the rationalising of the whole question, and as bringing the doctrine of Atonement more strictly within the bounds of ethical categories.

Nevertheless, I think this will be found on reflection to be one more attempt (and there have been far too many in the history of the doctrine) to evade the real problem and to escape the difficulty. It is the Cross itself after all that calls for explanation, and there is no getting round it. Dorner says that Christ "frequently at fitting times describes His suffering and death as a task prescribed on Him by God. His suffering and death are to Him not merely an occurence or misfortune so that He cannot avoid death without unfaithfulness to Himself." (Syst.Christ.Doct.III.413) That is the very point. The death itself is Christ's great positive act. It is not an accident of His calling. I heartily agree with Thomasius of the Erlangen School:- "In fact the chief stress so much lies upon the sacrifice that the death, the blood, can almost be spoken of as the whole through which reconciliation is effected".(Franks,Hist.of Doct.309) The Atonement <u>problem</u> is the Death of Christ - which has got to be isolated and explained.

The Purpose of this Thesis, as has been said, is to show that the deepest questions in the doctrine receive their best answer in the ancient Patristic theory; and I start from Coleridge and Maurice because it seems to me that both of them in their writings — sometimes consciously and of set purpose, sometimes coming on the matter as it were by chance — have answered these questions, more

than any other theologians of modern times, in a manner essentially similar to the answer supplied by that theory.

I bracket the two thinkers together because the fundamental principles of both in this matter show the same prevailing tendency. Moreover, Maurice derives from Coleridge. That large, generous, expansive though unsystematised body of theology for which the name of F.D.Maurice stands in English thought, and which exercised such an immense and beneficent influence on the theologians, poets, reformers of the later nineteenth century, is really an outgrowth and further development of those extraordinary flashes of insight, those original, germinative sparks of thought shot forth by Coleridge in the period of the Romantic Revival.

I have to seek an answer to the question - precisely why has Christ to suffer? Where lies the necessity? Anselm states the question with the utmost clearness and vigour: "Quaeritur enim, cur Deus aliter hominem salvare non potuit, aut si potuit, cur hoc modo voluit. Nam et inconveniens videtur esse Deo hominem hoc modo salvasse; nec apparet, quid mors illa valeat ad salvandum hominem. Mirum enim est, si Deus sic delectatur aut eget sanguine innocentis, ut non nisi interfecto eo parcere velit aut possit nocenti". (Cur Deus Homo.I.IO)

Yes. Cur Deus Homo? Why this dreadful descent into the humiliation of death? I shall attempt to find the answer in that very fact which Anselm in the sequel of his work set himself to repudiate - the power of evil to demand a ransom. "This sacrifice", says Sabatier, "Christ Himself voluntarily offered, not to God, Who had no need of it, - not to the devil, who had no right to it - but

to His brethren whom He wished to deliver, etc. (Theological Symposium, p.218)

"The devil had no right to it." May it not be that the devil had power to require it?

I may indicate the Scope of the Thesis as follows:- I shall first of all deal with the two writers, Coleridge and Maurice, in turn, indicating in each case the various points of their actual teaching on the Atonement. I shall then endeavour to show the affinity of their leading principles with that theory to which I wish to call fresh attention, viz,- the Patristic theory of Ransom. This theory itself will then require some description, and I shall set it forth, briefly, as it appears in the pages of Gregory of Nyssa - where we have it in its purest form. Next will follow - an account of Anselm's refutation of the theory - my own counter criticism of Anselm and of the whole "Satisfaction" idea in Atonement doctrine - criticism of the purely subjective theory of "Moral Influence", showing the defects of that theory as an explanation of the Atonement, and pointing out how essentially the teaching of Coleridge and Maurice is to be distinguished from it. This will be followed, finally, by a constructive summary of the doctrine.

(Appendix D.)

CHAPTER I.

COLERIDGE.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge is the great high priest of our English Romantics. He is emotional, imaginative, strange, individual, adventurous, - far removed from any classic regulation or order. Yet also, very curiously, he is an extraordinarily sane Rationalist and Metaphysician. When dealing with religious or philosophical matters his mind, which so habitually wanders and strays in the wild regions of the dream world, has a brilliance almost unique in its search for precision of thought and word, and in its sense of the importance of absolute correctness of expression.

(I) GENERAL.

The influence of Coleridge on all departments of our life and thought has been very great, and it is not surprising that fresh attention is being directed to him at the present time. Testimonies to that influence abound in our literature.

> Tulloch says: "That Coleridge's thought was a new power is beyond question. The 'Aids to Reflection' created a real epoch in Christian thought. The fact is that the later streams of thought in England are all more or less coloured by his influence." "Many of his hints and suggestions", says James Russell Lowell, are more pregnant than whole treatises".
>
> Dr.J.H.Muirhead has borne the following significant and weighty testimony ("Contemporary British Philosophy", 1923. vol.I, p.309): "I do not think that there is a point in the idealism of the 'seventies which was not anticipated, perhaps even better expressed, than it has ever been since, by Coleridge in one place or another of his numerous writings. What was left to the generation I am speaking of was to familiarise students of philosophy by translation and commentary with the works of Kant and Hegel, and by systematic exposition to complete the work which Coleridge had planned and had let drop from his hands."

Such striking witness from that distinguished philosopher of the present day, Dr.Muirhead, is welcome, for it is time that Coleridge's thought were looked into afresh and the illumination regained which it is fitted to cast upon such deep matters as this of the Christian Atonement.

Coleridge's most distinctive work in theology and the most earnest desire of that severely rational element that lay deep in his mind, was to "restore the broken harmony between reason and religion". He desired to commend the Christian Religion to thinking men for their wholehearted acceptance, and he set before him as his aim to make Christianity a religious philosophy. He is always appealing to reason. He takes a broad view of religion, and his constant ambition is to present Christuanity as a living mode of thought embracing all the activity of man, a kind of spiritual philosophy appealing to reason as well as to conscience and faith. In the'Aids to Reflection' throughout, Coleridge makes this rationalising purpose of his clear. Let us take one or two passages:

> "The position I have undertaken to defend is that the Christian Faith is the perfection of human intelligence. The mysteries of Christianity are reason - reason in its highest form of self-affirmation." (Preface.xvi.)
> "I had the following objects principally in view:- first, to exhibit the true and scriptural meaning and intent of several articles of faith that are rightly classed among the mysteries and peculiar doctrines of Christianity. Secondly, to show the perfect rationality of these doctrines, and their freedom from all just objection when examined by their proper organ, the reason and conscience of man." (p.II4)
> "By undeceiving, enlarging and informing the intellect, philosophy sought to elevate and purify the moral character. Christianity reverses the order. Her first step was to cleanse the heart, but the benefit did not stop there. Christianity restores the intellect likewise to its natural clearness.....The hopes, the fears, the remembrances, the anticipations, the inward and outward experience, the belief and the faith, of a Christian, form of themselves a philosophy and a sum of knowledge which a life spent in the grove of Academus or the painted Porch could not have attained or collected. The result is contained in the fact of a wide and still widening Christendom".(p.I45-6)

In that extraordinary desire for accuracy and clearness both of thought and expression which Coleridge manifests throughout his prose works, he more than once in the 'Aids to Reflection' gives a concise summary of what he has been teaching up to that point; and we might here take one of these bird's-eye views which will set before us an outline of his argument:-

> "My first attempt was to satisfy you that there is a spiritual principle in man, and to expose the sophistry of the arguments in support of the contrary. Our next step was to clear the road of all counterfeits by showing what is not the spirit, what is not spiritual religion. And this was followed by an attempt to establish a difference in kind between religious truths and the deductions of speculative science; yet so as to prove that the former are not only equally rational with the latter, but that they alone appeal to reason in the fulness and living reality of their power.....Having then enumerated the articles of the Christian Faith peculiar to Christianity, I entered on the great object of the present work: namely, the removal of all valid objections to these articles on the grounds of reason and conscience." (p.249)

(2) RELATION TO KANT.

The philosophical reader as he takes up the study of Coleridge's theological thought will be forcibly struck at once by the undoubted resemblance of its foundation principles to those of the great system of Kant.

Coleridge's famous distinction (of which he makes so much) between Reason and Understanding; his powerful convictions as to the will, its freedom and self-legislative character; his ideas of original sin, of soul, of duty; indeed his entire ethical system(so far as he has a system): are easily recognisable as almost entirely Kantian - in appearance at least. A definite genetic relation is certainly suggested, although the appearance of similarity is perhaps greater than the reality. There are distinctions that are

fairly vital and far-reaching.

Coleridge has a truer sense than Kant has of the realities of man's moral experience. He is more truly religious in his trend of thought. Kant's real interest all through his work is quite apparently scientific, and it is really this scientific interest that determines the form of Kant's ethical and religious theories. Coleridge feels more deeply that life is not altogether amenable to scientific treatment. He is rather like Jacobi than Kant in his religious sentiments, - pious, lyrical, romantic, experiential, rather than strictly scientific or philosophical. Undoubtedly Kant's forms of thought are the original sources of Coleridge's forms, but Coleridge takes them up into a different order of mind, a more human and emotional order of mind, than that which originally projected them. In a very interesting passage in the "Biographia Literaria" Coleridge himself has referred to this quality of his mind in its attitude to truth, and has attributed it largely to his study of the Mystics. The writings of the Mystics "acted in no slight degree to prevent my mind from being imprisoned within the outline of any single dogmatic system. They contributed to keep alive the heart in the head; gave me an indistinct yet stirring and working presentiment that all the products of the mere reflective faculty partook of death." (p.75). Franks, in comparing the theological influence of Coleridge in England with that of Schleiermacher in Germany, says that one important difference is that in Coleridge the Kantian Criticism is less thoroughly applied to doctrine than it is in Schleiermacher, the consequence being that whereas the latter presents an anthropological Christianity, Coleridge is able to accept the orthodox Christianity of the creeds.

Coleridge himself freely acknowledges his indebtedness to Kant, and the distinction between Reason and Understanding, which forms the subject of considerable discussion in the Aids - and indeed is interwoven with his argument throughout - is definitely based on the epoch-making Kantian conception of the "Categories of Understanding" and the "Ideas of Reason". But it will be found that Coleridge really puts that conception to his own use and in various ways alters it to suit the requirements of his own purpose.

He himself looks upon the distinction as being of supreme and vital importance:-

> "Until you have mastered the fundamental difference in kind between the reason and the understanding as faculties of the human mind, you cannot escape a thousand difficulties in philosophy. It is preeminently the gradus ad philosophiam." (Table-Talk.p.94)

> "This view of the Understanding as differing in degree from Instinct and in kind from Reason is an indispensable preliminary to the removal of the most formidable obstacles to an intelligent belief in the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel." (Aids.197)

It must be confessed that Coleridge's elaborate discussion of this question is, from a strictly psychological or ethical point of view, confused and not always consistent. The general scheme is obviously based on the great Kantian distinction, but Coleridge's nomenclature crosses Kant's at various points, and does not always mean the same thing.

> "Reason," he says, "is much nearer to sense than to understanding, for reason is a direct aspect of truth, an inward beholding, having a similar relation to the intelligible or spiritual as sense has to the material or phenomenal." (182)

> "There is an intuition or immediate beholding accompanied by a conviction of the necessity and universality of the truth so beholden,&c".(184)

"Immediate beholding," "direct aspect of truth,"—that is "Reason" for Coleridge, and this is his real distinction from Kant.

The fact is that Coleridge entirely abandons and demolishes Kant's scepticism. He knows nothing of the limitation of "reason" to a merely regulative function, nor of the ideas of reason being illusory. The ideas of reason for Coleridge are facts, not mere ideas. They are revelations of reality - they give actual truth.

The distinction, of course, does not hold and has no real significance in modern thought, but it is clear why it is of such vital importance for Coleridge: what he wants to demonstrate is that man, through his conscience and reason, has access to spiritual reality, the spiritual world with its laws and requirements is open to him directly, and the human will is free to obey these laws so revealed. That is Coleridge's intention all through the discussion. It is this "spiritual principle", this direct contact with and participation in the ultimate spiritual reality of the universe which is God, that constitutes the essential and distinctive nature of man and gives him his dignity. It is here also, in this highest aspect of his life, that man goes wrong and sins, here that he stands in need of redemption. Here is Coleridge's real interest in pursuing so elaborately the distinction of Reason and Understanding. The Will, directed by reason - that "Reason" which is the source of actual truth to man - is for Coleridge the crucial point of the whole human situation. Here "the sin and the saving lies".

While Coleridge in his whole treatment of the will or spiritual principle in man is directly based on Kant's great fact of the Self Legislative Will, yet he really differs from Kant. Kant's "Self Legislative Will" is after all, from the point of view of actual reality, a mere abstraction. It is only a "practical postulate", a

demand of the moral life. In spite of Kant's various inconsistencies of statement, this is the real effect of his teaching. Coleridge's "will", on the other hand, is in every sense a real fact. It is in his view intensely real - a fact by itself in the universe. The position of Coleridge here differs also from that of Hegel. For Hegel the will of man comes to be identified either with the empirical process or with God. For Coleridge it is a reality in itself, a fact, over against both God and the world, an aboriginal independent self, whose acts and decisions have no other origin but itself.

Now this transcendant, spiritual, supernatural character of the will is, Coleridge confesses, the "groundwork of his whole scheme", and he dwells at length upon it in the "Aids to Reflection".

> "The will is preeminently the spiritual constituent of our being, and the spiritual and supernatural are synonymous". (p.44)
> "Whatever, by whatever means, has its principle in itself, so far as to originate its actions, cannot be contemplated in any of the forms of space and time; it must be considered as spirit or spiritual.(49)
> "The moment we assume an origin in nature, a true beginning, an actual first, - that moment we rise above nature and are compelled to assume a supernatural power.(212) Herein the will consists,&c."

He goes on to show that this spirituality of the will, appearing as freedom and self-originating power, is a direct experience. "As we know what life is by living, so we know what will is by acting". And if proof of this freedom be called for, or doubt be cast on the experience of it as being an illusion, Coleridge replies that the consciousness of freedom to act and to originate my own acts is axiomatic in experience and can only be proved in the same way as all other self-evident axioms are proved - by the inconceivability of the contrary. He is here strictly in line with modern logic.

There are certain ultimate axiomatic truths which are not susceptable of proof except that it is impossible to conceive the contrary. Coleridge holds the freedom of the will and its origination of its own acts to be such a truth.

It may be said that Coleridge's views here as to the will's freedom and self-originating power are quite in accordance with the conclusions of recent psychology. For example, Dr.Francis Aveling in "The Psychological Approach to Reality",1929,p.142, referring to "the very considerable series of researches that have been carried out during the past twenty years or so upon the human will", proceeds:-

> "Little by little in these investigations a theoretical Psychology of Will, still, it is true, elementary, has been built up. In that Psychology, both the teleological and the efficient causality of willing (resolving, deciding, determining,&c.) must be recognised. The experimental work already done leads us to distinguish conation (trying, striving, achieving,&c.) from volition proper. And it has been found that in truly voluntary acts the striving or doing is related to the determination or resolve to do as effect to cause."

Now in relation to Coleridge's treatment of "reason" as direct vision of reality and of will as self-legislative, it may be added before leaving the subject, that this shows a distinct advance upon Kant's views: in this sense, that, if the "ideas of reason" are not mere postulates but revealed realities, it follows that the categorical imperative (the law according to which the will acts) issues not merely from the depths of our own nature, but from the heart of the spiritual universe itself. We are self-legislative, but we only <u>re-enact</u> the law already enacted by God. <u>We recognise</u> rather than <u>constitute</u> the law of our own being. The moral law given in reason is the echo within our souls of the voice of the Eternal.

Kant's "self-legislative will" is not, therefore, the whole truth.

The law according to which our will legislates is God's law - of which, (owing to Coleridges view of "reason") we are directly conscious. So that the "postulate of the Practical Reason" is no longer a mere postulate - it comes within the sphere of certain knowledge. (Appendix E.) (Appendix F.)

(3) ORIGINAL SIN AND REDEMPTION.

There are three moments or stages in Coleridge's theory of the Atonement:-

Ist - the free will acting and legislating according to the law given in its own reason.

2nd - "Original Sin" - the evil which acts on and in the will.

3rd - the redemption or deliverance of the will.

We have considered above his views on reason and the will, and have seen how they derive their form largely from the Kantian system, although in some essential ways they show a radical divergence from it. We now pass to a consideration of "Original Sin" and its remedy in Redemption.

As Coleridge has close affinities with the Greek view that reason is contemplation of the Ideas, a faculty independent of sense and the sole source of real or higher knowledge, so he is strongly reminiscent of the early Greek Christian Fathers in his appreciation of the tremendous fact of evil, its power and its significance; and here, I would venture to assert, we find his credentials as a guide into the mysteries of the Atonement. Neither in the actual expreience of life nor in the study of Christian ~~theol~~-

doctrine can the Atonement be really approached except through that dark and dreadful region. Many of the failures to understand and to explain the Atonement as well as to experience its power are due to this initial failure to look deeply enough into the terrible abyss of evil. Coleridge never minimises sin, nor does he hesitate for a moment to attribute it to its true cause, or to assess the ultimate accountability for it. It is evil, wholly and originally evil - and it is mine, wholly and originally mine. That is his teaching.

Cole ridge disclaims any attempt to account for the ultimate origin of evil in the universe and refuses to discuss the question, as being beside his purpose, but in all his teaching on the matter there are three things he makes clear: (I) The only real evil is an evil will - there is no sin, can be none, except in the will. (2) He totally ~~the~~ rejects the idea of any Divine causality in relation to evil. (3) He asigns evil, and evil alone, as the necessitating cause of Christ's death. These are vital principles in his theory of Atonement.

Now the meaning Coleridge gives to "Original Sin" is well known:-

> "I profess a deep conviction that man was and is a fallen creature, not by accidents of bodily conditions or any other cause.....but as diseased in his will, in that will which is the true and only strict synonym of the word "I" or the intelligent self." (Aids.I04)
> "With sin originant, not derived from without: - not with sin inflicted, which would be a calamity: - not with sin imputed, for which let the planter be responsible: - but I begin with original sin".(204)
> "In this sense of the word "original" it is evident that the phrase original sin is a pleonasm, the epithet not adding to the thought but only enforcing it. For if it be sin it must be original; and a state or act that has not its origin in the will, may be a calamity, deformity, disease or mischief: but a sin it cannot be." (2I5)
> "A moral evil is an evil originating in a will". (233)

The position is quite clear. "Original Sin" is simply sin that originates in the will - that is, all sin, for only sin originating in the will is sin at all. All sin is original sin. Coleridge's conception of evil, therefore, the evil from which man is to be redeemed, is that it is the corruption or depravation of the will.

His objection to the familiar idea of "Original Sin" is that universal sin resulting from man's common nature is not sin. It is universal calamity. It is in us hereditary, therefore natural, belonging to nature, not to the "spiritual Principle" which is the will, and cannot be laid to our door as guilt; although at first - in our first parents - it was "original", that is, willed, and therefore sin. Coleridge maintains that this is the true Scripture doctrine.(Aids.235) The real difference between Coleridge and the familiar idea of "original sin" is that in the case of each one of the millions of men the sin is (with Coleridge) ultimately due to the self-determination of the will - whereas it has been perverted into the "monstrous fiction" of hereditary sin"(243)

Now while Coleridge's idea here is thus clear and unambiguous, his intention being to regard all sin as arising definitely in an act of will, and to deny to anything else the name of sin, it is interesting to notice that here again he has a close resemblance to Kant, and moreover that he has really been somewhat deflected from this simple thought and led into a position inconsistent with it under the influence of Kant. Kant's view of original sin is found in that extraordinary book, "Religion Within the Limits of Mere Reason", a book in which we really have Kant's theory of the Atonement, or rather his conception of the Fall and Restoration of man.

Kant's uncompromising assertion is that the bias to evil is innate and universal and yet willed by man himself and consequently guilt on his part;-

> "So werden wir diesen einen naturlichen Hang zum Bösen, und da er doch immer selbst verschuldet sein muss, ihn selbst ein radikales, angebornes (nichts desto weniger aber uns von uns selbst zugezogenes) Böse in der menschlichen Natur nennen können." (German Text.p.32)

A radical evil inborn in man and yet entailed by man upon himself. This inborn universal bias to evil is, apparently, the individual's own sin, and therefore guilt. And Kant utterly rejects (as Coleridge does) the thought of inheritance in regard to this, for that would do away with our responsibility for it. Kant attributes it to an "intelligible act prior to all experience", an act "not in time". "It is our own act, yet it is emphatically declared to precede all acts. It is innate in the sense that the will must be conceived to have given itself this bias before any opportunity arises for employing its freedom within experience".(Seth."Kant to Hegel" p.II2)

Kant's well known position here offers a very extreme doctrine of "Original Sin", and one, I think, far beyond what Coleridge intends; yet we find him - obviously under this influence - speaking as follows:-

> "Let the evil be supposed such as to imply the impossibility of an individual's referring to any particular time at which it might be conceived to have commenced, or to any period of his existence at which it was not existing. Let it be supposed that the subject stands in no relation whatever to time, can neither be called in time nor out of time, ...let the reader suppose this, and he will have before him the precise import of the Scriptural doctrine of Original Sin." (Aids.23I-2)

But the truth of Pfleiderer's remark is certainly seen here - that "Coleridge's idea of 'Original Sin' is rather Kantian than Biblical". In speaking of an act of will "not in time", it seems

to me that Coleridge really gives away what he has gained by his very simple idea of "Original Sin" - that it is always a sin originating in a will. So far as I - as a moral individual - am concerned, how does this sin which is due to "an intelligible act prior to all experience", an act "not in time", and which is inborn in all men - differ from the familiar Augustinian view of original sin and guilt? The problem remains, how a man can be held responsable for a sin which he did not commit.

Having shown the nature of the evil which is the occasion of Redemption, Coleridge goes forward to expound his view of that great transaction itself, and notwithstanding the diffuseness and want of system in his writing, the various points stand out with sufficient clearness and the total conception is unmistakably consistent.

To begin with, He is quite clear regarding his view of what the Christian Religion is. "Christianity and Redemption," he says, "are synonymous terms." (Aids.253) "The two great moments of the Christian Religion are, Original Sin and Redemption, that the ground, this the superstructure, of our faith." (250) Among all the works of God, the "main design" is the "fore-ordained redemption of man." (244) And he makes perfectly clear the fact that sin (as he has defined it - "original sin") is alone the necessitating cause or ground of the redeeming death of Christ. He repeats this over and over again, and it is important to notice that Coleridge"s whole treatment of the matter shows that he sees the entire cause, the sole necessity which demands that death, in the evil, the "original sin".

Next, Coleridge pointedly draws attention to the distinction

between the Act of Redemption itself (which he speaks of as "transcendent") and the effects of that act as they are realised in the experience of men. In doing so he gives a full and careful analysis of St.Paul's teaching on the Atonement, and the essential features of the Apostle's doctrine have never been explained with more power and subtlety. By disentangling the effects or consequences of Christ's act as they are felt in the experience of the redeemed from the essential nature of the act itself, as an act of God in Christ, he manages most skilfully and successfully to refute the whole idea of a satisfaction being made to God in the Atonement, that forensic or juridical view which "offends the conscience and moral sense".

> "Now the article of Redemption may be considered in a twofold relation - in relation to the antecedent, that is the Redeemer's act as the efficient cause and condition of redemption; and in relation to the consequent, that is the effects in and for the redeemed".(264)

He shows the various metaphors by which StPaul illustrates the consequences of the act - sin offerings, reconciliation, satisfaction for a debt,&c. - and proceeds:-

> "Certain divines have supposed that the various expressions of St.Paul are to be interpreted literally: for example, that sin is, or involves, an infinite debt.....a debt owing to the vindictive justice of God the Father. Likewise that God the Father by His absolute decree or through the necessity of His unchangeable justice had determined to exact the full sum; which must therefore be paid either by ourselves or by some other on our behalf. Are debt, satisfaction, payment in full, creditor's rights and the like, nomina propria, by which the very nature of redemption and its occasions are expressed:- or are they, with several others, figures of speech for the purpose of illustrating the nature and extent of the consequences and effects of the redemptive act, and to excite in the receivers a due sense of the magnitude and manifold operation of the boon and of the love and gratitude due to the Redeemer?"(270-I). "It is the effects and consequences of Christ's mediation ~~that~~ on which St.Paul is dilating".(73)

Coleridge complains that theologians have erred in applying to

the act of redemption itself those metaphors by which St.Paul is describing only the effects of that act in the experience of men: thus attributing to the Apostle crude theories of the Atonement which have appeared in the history of the doctrine, but which the moral sense of mankind cannot but reject, and which, as Coleridge trenchantly insists, St.Paul himself would repudiate. The distinction is very important and Coleridge has rendered signal service in pointing it out so clearly. All views of the Atonement naturally seek to base themselves on the New Testament, but it has not always been recognised that what is said about the Atonement as it comes into our experience does not necessarily apply to the act of Christ itself or to God's actual intention in that act.

Now as to this "transcendent" matter itself - the Redemptive Act - the essential nature and meaning of the death of Christ - Coleridge speaks with reverence, with caution, but at the same time with that determination (which is the purpose of his whole inquiry) to push <u>rationalising</u> and <u>explanation</u> to the utmost reach of possibility: to leave nothing dark that can be made light.

> "The mysterious act, the operative cause, is transcendent, <u>Factum est</u>: and beyond the information contained in the enunciation of the fact, it can be characterised only by the nature of the consequences." (263)
>
> "Respecting the Redemptive Act itself and the Divine Agent, we know from revelation that He was made a 'quickening spirit': and that in order to this it was necessary that God should be 'manifest in the flesh': that the Eternal Word, through whom and by whom the world was and is, should be made flesh, assume our humanity personally, fulfil all righteousness, and so suffer and so die for us, as in dying to conquer death for as many as should receive Him. More than this, the mode, the possibility, we are not competent to know. It is a mystery by the necessity of

> the subject - which at all events it will be time enough for us to seek and expect to understand when we understand the mystery of our natural life"(267).

But Coleridge himself does go beyond this mere mystery, this simple declaration of a factum est; and I find that he ventures two statements in regard to the nature of the act.

For one thing, the act of redemption is God's own act, and is in the nature of a begetting, and its effect, a new birth in man:-

> "Now John the beloved disciple.....recording the Redeemer's own words, enunciates the fact itself, to the full extent in which it is enunciable to the human mind, simply and without any metaphor, by identifying it in kind with a fact of hourly occurrence, a fact of every man's experience - known to all yet not better understood than the fact described by it. In the redeemed it is a regeneration, a birth, a spiritual seed impregnated and evolved, the germinal principle of a higher and enduring life, of a spiritual life"(206).

Secondly, Coleridge makes clear, in conformity with his whole teaching on the will or spiritual principle in man, and on original sin, that the redemptive act is an act that takes place in or on the human will. Redemption for Coleridge is the redemption of the will. Christ acts upon the will by a kind of "inward co-agency", compatible with the existence of a personal free will, which enables the will to repent.

> "Whenever the man is determined (that is, impelled and directed) to act in harmony of intercommunion, must not something be attributed to this all present power of acting in the will? And by what fitter names can we call this than - the Law as empowering; the Word as informing; and the Spirit as actuating?..... We may believe in the Apostle's assurance that not only doth the Spirit 'help our infirmities', that is, act on the will by a predisposing influence from without, as it were, though in a spiritual manner and without suspending or destroying its freedom;.....but that in regenerate souls it may act in the will; that uniting and becoming one with our will or spirit it may 'make intercession for us'"(47-8).

> "The fact or actual truth having been assured to us by Revelation, it is not impossible, by steadfast meditation on the idea and supernatural character of a personal

> will, for a mind spiritually disciplined to satisfy itself that the redemptive act supposes (and that our redemption is even negatively conceivable only on the supposition of) an Agent who can at once act on the will as an exciting cause quasi ab extra; and in the will as the condition of its potential, and as the ground of its actual, being." (276)

This is as far as Coleridge goes in this transcendent matter, but out of his somewhat sporadic discussion I hold that there certainly do emerge the elements of the true explanation of the Atonement.

In Coleridge, then, I find:-

(I) The Necessity for the death of Christ is in the Evil.

(2) The actual Object accomplished by that death is the deliverance of the will.

CHAPTER II

MAURICE.

F.D.Maurice is a great human figure. He was a great christian, and has really been a great force in modern English theology. He is a supreme example of the adage pectus facit theologum, and the bitter controversy and persecution which are associated with his name arose from the very greatness of the man's heart.

Maurice was a theologian by nature and grace, by training and experience. An extraordinary intellectual and moral honesty, a pure love of truth, an earnest and wholehearted desire to be of service and help to his fellows - based on an almost unexampled humility and selflessness: that(one would say from a study of his life and writings) is the fundamental thing in Maurice as a man, the fountainhead of all he stands for as a teacher, and the real source of the painful opposition from which he suffered so much.

Maurice is an outstanding example of the "broad" or "liberal" tendency of thought in English theology, and it has been said of him that he "fashioned God in his own image." It is very largely a true charge, for it is his own great heart of love and charity, making him see the good in all things, carrying him so far in tolerance and broadmindedness as to lead him to say that "all men are right in what they affirm, only wrong in what they deny" - that raises him to that conception of the universality of the divine love which lies at the basis of all his teaching. And it is because of this living, personal character of his views as the outcome of his own convictions and feelings, that Maurice's

teaching exercised such a far-reaching influence - and not because of any complete and rounded-off system of thought, for he had none.

Now Maurice is a direct and confessed disciple of Coleridge. Many other influences helped to shape that vast body of theology, unsystematised, unwieldy, but so expansive, generous and true, which gathers around his name - Erskine in Scotland, for example, contributed greatly to the form in which his thoughts are cast - but the philosophical and ethical presuppositions on which his teaching ~~rests~~ rests are from Coleridge. On this matter we have Maurice's own repeated and enthusiastic testimony:-

> "I had read Coleridge before I came up (to Cambridge) and I had received a considerable influence from him"...."I defended Coleridge's metaphysics against Utilitarian teaching"....."I had no inclination to infidelity, Coleridge had done much to preserve me from that"...."I was still under the influence of Coleridge's writings, himself I never saw." (Life.I.176-8)

His Dedicatory Letter to Derwent Coleridge prefixed to the "Kingdom of Christ" consists largely of a grateful acknowledgement of his debt to Coleridge:-

> "The 'Aids to Reflection' is a book to which I feel myself under deep and solemn obligations. I can testify that it was most helpful in delivering me from a number of philosophical phrases and generalisations, most helpful in enabling me to perceive that the deepest principles of all are those which the peasant is as capable of apprehending and entering into as the schoolman.....The power of perceiving that by the very law of the reason the knowledge of God must be given to it; that the moment it attempts to create its Maker it denies itself; the conviction that the most opposite kind of thing to that which Unitarianism dreams of is necessary if the demands of reason are to be satisfied - I must acknowledge that I received from him, if I am not to be ungrateful to the Highest Teacher, Who might certainly have chosen another instrument for communicating His mercies, but Who has been pleased, in very

many cases as I know, to make use of this one."

But apart from any spoken acknowledgement, we shall see that the influence of Coleridge is very evident in the fundamental elements of Maurice's religious philosophy. In his teaching of religion his aim, like that of Coleridge, is to "give to man a divine philosophy". He wants to rationalise, to explain, to restore the harmony between reason and religion.

> "I do not believe," says Archdeacon Hare, that there is any other living man who has done anything at all approaching what Mr.Maurice has effected in reconciling the reason and conscience of the thoughtful men of our age to the faith of our Church," (Life of Maurice.II.184)

Now in a great body of theology like that of Maurice, which is as sporadic, occasional and unsystematised as that of Coleridge himself, it is not easy to lay one's finger on what might be called the core or central principle of the teaching. There seem to be many centres. Canon Storr says that Maurice's fundamental principle is his belief in God's nearness to man - which is consummated in the Incarnation of Christ. The Incarnation is the supreme example of the union of God and man, the Divine Logos incarnate in Christ is, in some measure, present in all men, and thus the Person of Christ is the centre of Maurice's creed. Certainly this Platonic conception of participation in the Divine is a very important element in Maurice's view of the Atonement. Again, Tulloch makes out two fundamental principles: the <u>first</u> - what has just been mentioned, the great truth of the indwelling Christ, Christ the Head of every man. And the <u>second</u> - his desire for Unity, and his sense of the oneness that really underlies all creeds and faiths.

But perhaps one can scarcely speak of a "fundamental Principle"

or even two, in such a systen as that of Maurice. As Pfleiderer says, "his theology is nore complicated than that of any other theologian, and is on many points extremely vague....His thought lacked clearness and steadiness, and his knowledge concentration and thoroughness" (Develop.of Theol.373) In this respect Pfleiderer draws an interesting parallel between Maurice and the German theologian Dorner. In both he finds the same high moral and religious tone, the same want of logical consistency in their views.

In coming, therefore, to a consideration of Maurice's actual teaching on the Atonement one has to pick one's way through a miscellaneous mass of material, and I find that his ideas may be gathered quite as much from his intimate letters as from his more formal works. The main sources are - (a) the "Doctrine of Sacrifice", (b) the "Theological Essays", (c) certain important Letters.

POINTS IN MAURICE'S ATONEMENT DOCTRINE.

(I) FREE WILL.

Maurice's teaching on the Will, its freedom and responsibility, is the same as that of Coleridge, and the first thing he makes clear in the Atonement as it applies to man, the first essential step towards understanding the doctrine or experiencing the power of the Atonement, is found in the will, the self and its sin. The sin that calls forth the redeeming act arises out of the will. It is my own. It is "original" (in Coleridge's sense). The intense conviction of personal responsibility is as unmistakable in Maurice as it is in Coleridge, as it is in Kant's great doctrine of the Self-Legislative Will; and it is the first thing to be

recognised in his doctrine.

> "I did this act, I thought this thought. It was a wrong act, it was a wrong thought, and it was mine. The world about me took no account of it, I can resolve it into no habits or motives; or if I can, the analysis does not help me in the least. Whatever the habit was, I wore the habit, whatever the motive was, I was the mover...Anything is better than the presense of this dark self." (Essays.22)
>
> "That sense of a sin intricately, inseparably interwoven with the very fibres of their being, of a sin which they cannot get rid of without destroying themselves, does haunt those very men who you say take no account of it. This is not the idiosyncrasy of a few strange temperaments. It is that which besets us all." (25)

This point need not here be dwelt upon further. Maurice has a great deal to say on the subject of the will, but for our present purpose this is all one need refer to - the will as the ultimate source of sin, and as in the last resort responsible and guilty. His teaching on this matter is entirely in line with Coleridge.

(II) THE NATURE AND POWER OF EVIL.

Maurice does not give us any more than Coleridge the ultimate origin of evil - who has done so, or can? - but he has some strong things to say on its nature and its power. On this I shall call in evidence mainly three documents: the Third of the "Theological Essays"; the XVth Sermon in the "Doctrine of Sacrifice"; and the Letter to Hort in the Life.II.I5ff. These are of great importance, and one actually wonders if they have been noticed at all by certain writers on the Atonement, for Maurice here as it seems to me touches the very core of the whole matter and has something to say on evil, its reality, its meaning, its power, which might have obviated much subtle writing that goes round and round the cardinal points in the doctrine without ever coming to the heart of them.

There is a light shed here on the meaning of the Atonement which, I think, is hardly to be seen anywhere else since the early Patristic age.

Latting alone the absolute origin of evil - whence comes the evil that is felt in every man's life and which gives rise to the sense of sin and responsibility we have just been considering?

> "There is in men a sense of bondage to some power which they feel that they should resist and cannot. That feeling of the 'ought' and 'cannot' is what forces, not upon scholars, but upon the poorest men, the question of the freedom of the will, and bids them seek some solution of it..... You may talk against devilry as you like; you will not get rid of it unless you can tell human beings whence comes that sense of a tyranny over their very selves which they express in a thousand forms of speech, which excites them to the greatest, often the most profitless indignation against the arrangements of the world, which tempts them to people it and heaven also with objects of terror and despair"(Essays.4I-2)

There are set forth various ways of accounting for this evil that so seems to enslave us. The flesh, the body itself, say some, is inherently evil and must be destroyed. The soul, the spirit, say others, is corrupt, or has become corrupt, and must rise and regain its lost purity. But by what ladder? Ah no, say the mystics, the soul must not rise but rather sink. It must die. Till it die it will never know what life is. But there is a third, an older explanation which may be thought quite obsolete.

> "There is no disguising it - the assertion stands broad and patent in the four Gospels - the acknowledgement of an Evil Spirit is <u>characteristic</u> of Christianity.....When I speak of the existence and presence of an Evil Spirit as being characteristic of the Gospels, I mean this:- that in them first the idea of a spirit directly and absolutely opposed to the Father of Lights, to the God of absolute love and goodness, bursts full upon us. There first we are taught that it is not merely something in peculiarly evil men which is contending against the good and true; no, nor something in all men: that <u>God has an antagonist</u>, and that all men, bad and good, have the same.....The vision of a mere destroyer, a subverter of order, who is seeking continually to make us disbelieve in the Creator,

to forsake the order that we are in, takes the place of every other. With these discoveries another is always connected: that this tempter speaks to me, to myself, to the will; that over that he has established his tyranny; that there his chains must be broken; but that all things in nature, with the soul and the body, have partaken, and do partake, of the slavery to which the man himself has submitted.

I simply state these propositions; I am not going to defend them. If they cannot defend themselves, by the light which they throw on the anticipations and difficulties of the human spirit, by the hint of deliverance which they offer it, by the horrible dreams which they scatter, my arguments would be worth nothing.....

What is pravity or depravity - affix to it the epithets universal, absolute, or any you please - but an inclination to something which is not right, an inclination to turn away from that which is right? What is it that experiences that inclination? What is it that provokes that inclination? I believe it is the spirit within me which feels the inclination: I believe it is a spirit speaking to my spirit who stirs up the inclination. That old way of stating the case explains the facts, and commends itself to my reason. I cannot find any other which does not conceal some facts, and does not outrage my reason...

I cannot conceal my conviction, the result of my own experience, that your minds will be in a simpler, healthier state, that you will win a victory over some of the most plausible conventionalisms of this age, that you will grasp the truth you have more firmly, and be readier to receive any you have not yet apprehended, when you have courage to say, 'We do verily believe that we have a world, a flesh, and a DEVIL to fight with'"(Essays 42ff)

I have quoted these passages at length because we have here one of Maurice's most pregnant ideas and one of the most important for his conception of the Atonement. And what I have quoted is no occasional or momentary outburst on the part of Maurice. He dwells on the thought repeatedly. Take the following from the "Doctrine of Sacrifice":-

"Whatever our thoughts are about the existence or non-existence of an evil will, about the personality or impersonality of that will, about the influence of that will upon us, we all know, as a matter of fact, that whispers do come to us - certainly brought from no visible lips, - which take the form of accusations, cruel and malignant accusations, against persons who may or may not have done us wrong; who may be our enemies or who may be very dear to us.....We say it is within us, and we say rightly; but yet we know that down in those depths which the vulture's eye hath not seen, there is a slanderous voice

speaking to us - suggesting thoughts which we did not originate, which we shrink from, which being rejected, return again.

But the same secret whispers which seek to set a man at war with his neighbours strive also to set him at war with himself. The discontents, the terrible visions of the past and of the future, which every man has been conscience of, which seem to many as if they made up the sum of their existence - whence do they come? At first we think from without. We lay them to any annoying circumstances, to any disagreeable fellow-creatures. The same discoveries, which we cannot be deceived in, bring them nearer home. They must have more to do with us than with anything about us. They seem to move from us and yet toward us. There springs up in us, we cannot tell from whence, a desire to be freed from this vile state of mind, this self-torment.....
There is one more discovery still to be made. This spirit is the slanderer and accuser, not only of our brethren, not only of ourselves, but of God. Is it not so? &c."
(Doct.of Sacrifice.232-4)

Here we have some of the deepest elements of human experience, reminding us of the actual spiritual conflicts of Bunyan and other great wrestlers with inward evil. I shall quote a few further sentences on the same theme - from Maurice's famous Letter to Hort:-

"You think you do not find a distinct recognition of the devil's personality in my books. I am sorry if it is so. I am afraid I have been corrupted by speaking to a polite congregation!.....I do not know what he is by theological arguments, but I know by what I feel. I am sure there is one near me accusing God and my brethren to me. He is not myself; I should go mad if I thought he was. He is near my neighbours; I am sure he is not identical with my neighbours. But oh, most of all I am horrorstruck at the thought that we may confound him with God; the perfect darkness with the perfect light. I dare not deny that it is an evil will that tempts me; else I should begin to think evil is in God's creation, and is not the revolt from God, resistance to Him.....

When I spoke in the first edition of my 'Kingdom of Christ' of satisfaction offered by Christ to the devil, I was quoting from Bishop Hooper, and I wished to startle the admirers of our Reformers with the thought how vast a difference there must be between a theology which described the devil as demanding a price of blood, and God as demanding it. I did however recognise a deep practical meaning in Hooper's statement. It seems to me that in sore conflicts with the tempter one may find great comfort in saying, 'thou hast no claim on me; thou hast been paid full measure, pressed down and running over."(Life.II.21-2)

The fundamental elements of Maurice's doctrine are actually to be found in this passage:- the sense of the bondage of our will to sin and guilt - the forces of evil which account for that bondage - and Christ's great act called forth entirely by the need for delivering us from that bondage.

(III) "PLATONISM".

The third point in Maurice's doctrine of Atonement is what has been called his "Platonism", his great thought of the Indwelling Christ as the principle of man's true life, and the principle of unity among all men. Man's participation in the Divine through the Christ Who dwells within (akin to the Platonic "metechein" and to Coleridge's "reason") was a central and prevailing idea with Maurice, it is found throughout his religious works, and holds a vital place in his conception of the Atonement.

> "Christ is in every man, the source of all the light that ever visits him, the root of all the righteous acts he is ever able to conceive or do"(Essays.64).
> "We say boldly to the man (like Job) who declares that he has a righteousness which no one shall remove from him - 'that is true. You have such a righteousness. It is deeper than all the iniquity that is in you. It lies at the very ground of your existence'"(60).
> "That righteous King of your heart whom you have felt to be so near you, so one with you that you could hardly help identifying Him with yourself, even while you confessed that you were so evil, He is the Redeemer of man and of you" (67).
> "I hope by God's grace that no fear of offending my best friends will keep me from proclaiming that truth of Christ as the actual Head of man which I was sent into the world to proclaim"(Life.II.161).

His most beautiful expression of this truth is in the Letter to his mother in the Life,vol.I.154ff.

> "Know ye not that Jesus Christ is in you?' This question is often put in such a way as to distress poor humble persons very much. But nothing was further from the Apostle's thoughts. To give a proud professor a notion that he had

> attained anything in having the Lord of life near to him, to give the desponding spirit a gloomy sense of his distance from such a privilege, that was no part of Paul's commission or his practise.....The truth is that every man is in Christ; the condemnation of every man is that he will not own the truth; he will not act as if this were true, he will not believe that which is the truth, that, except he were joined to Christ, he could not think, breathe, live a single hour.... You wish and long to believe yourself in Christ; but you are afraid to do so because you think there is some experience that you are in Him necessary to warrant that belief. You have this warrant for believing yourself in Christ, that you cannot do one living act, you cannot obey one of God's commandments,you cannot pray, you cannot hope, you cannot love, if you are not in Him."

This is a really fine thought which Maurice is very fond of - as I have said he repeats it frequently throughout his writings. At the same time it almost amounts in his hands to a somewhat crude theory of Identification, so that Christ's obedience is humanity's obedience, Christ's sacrifice is humanity's sacrifice, and so on. I think the oft-quoted summary of his Atonement teaching which Maurice gives rests on this idea:-

> "Supposing all these principles gathered together; supposing the Father's will to be a will to all good; - supposing the Son of God, being one with Him, and Lord of men, to obey and fulfil in our flesh that will by entering into the lowest condition into which men had fallen through their sin; supposing this Man to be, for this reason, an object of continual complacency to His Father, and that complacency to be fully drawn out by the death of the Cross; supposing His death to be a sacrifice, the only complete sacrifice ever offered, the entire surrender of the whole spirit and body to God; is not this, in the highest sense, Atonement?"(Essays.I47)

Yes, it would be an Atonement, but only one side of the Atonement as taught by Maurice. It would show that pure sacrifice on the part of man which is the desired response to God's own sacrifice. But the passage is quite incomplete if put forth as a summary of Maurice's theory. As has been made apparent, it entirely omits certain vital elements.

A severe critic of Maurice's idea of Atonement doctrine appeared in J.B.Mozley ("Essays Historical and Theological"). He says (272) that Maurice "has a bias against all existing forms of opinion, all doctrines in the way in which they are actually held and received, and seems to consider it his special vocation to assail them. But allow him to construct the doctrine for himself, to put it in his own formula, and it will not be so very unlike the original one". When he comes to show how Maurice does this, Mozley quotes the "supposing" passage, and comments:- "If this passage means what it appears to do,....we must confess we do not see the great difference between Mr.Maurice's doctrine and that which he has been so strongly impugning.....Mr.Maurice's formula acknowledges the vicarious principle as much as the established one does. His language is that God, in consequence of His delight in the obedient, is reconciled to the disobedient(280)."

But it might fairly be replied to Mozley that the vicarious principle does not really appear in this passage - either in the sense of Christ suffering the penalty for all men, or of Christ satisfying the law of justice for all men. I think that in fairness to Maurice we must see that what is implied here is his peculiar idea of all men being in Christ,- all men actually obeying, suffering, pleasing God, in Christ. Maurice certainly has this in mind, and quite obviously feels that he is true to his own objection to the ordinary view of the vicarious principle of one standing in the place of another.

(IV) SACRIFICE.

The remaining fundamental point in Maurice's Atonement doctrine is the great principle of Sacrifice. Maurice holds very strong and emphatic ideas on this matter of Sacrifice. All Sacrifice proceeds ultimately from God Himself and originates with Him. This forms the subject of Maurice's book,"The Doctrine of Sacrifice", and may I think be regarded as his chief contribution to the explanation of the Atonement. The great idea is that in the whole transaction of Redemption it God Who is acting, God is acting in Christ, all that Christ does God does. It is God Himself Who provides the Atonement, the Redemption; He Himself makes the whole sacrifice. The argument is against the whole idea of Satisfaction, the idea that Christ in any sense makes a payment to God on man's behalf, from below. The whole movement proceeds from God and is directed by Him towards man's deliverance. And this, as we shall see, places Maurice in close affinity with the essential principle of the Patristic theory which this Thesis seeks to defend.

> "The Cross gathered up into a single transcendent act the very meaning of all that had been done. God was there seen in the might and power of His love, in direct conflict with sin, and death, and hell, triumphing over them by sacrifice"(Doct.of Sacrifice.256).
>
> "Those sacrifices, which it was supposed were to bend and determine His will, themsilves proceed from it"(69-70)
>
> "It is this idea of sacrifice, not as first rising from man to God, but as comong down from God upon man - as exhibited in His acts, as expressing and accomplishing His will - which I have been tracing through the histories of sacrifice which the Bible records; and which I have contrasted with the proud sacrifice, whereby man seeks to escape from the punishment of the sin which he has committed, and to convert God to his own evil mind. All who trusted God and gave up themselves, felt that there must be an obedience and a sacrifice which was the ground of theirs; an obedience and a sacrifice which was essentially divine, and therefore, essentially human....All our present life, all our thoughts of that which is to be for

ourselves and the world, are determined by this great principle" (273).

This is his idea of sacrifice. The whole movement is downwards from God to man, it is God Who makes the sacrifice. And as we shall see, this is of considerable significance in determining Maurice's real place in the history of the doctrine.

In these four points which I have gathered from Maurice's works we have the main elements of his teaching on the Atonement, and I shall conclude this chapter on Maurice by quoting the following important passage from the Essay on the Atonement, which might I think be regarded as an actual summary of his views on the matter.

> "The Scripture says, 'Because the children were partakers of flesh and blood He also Himself likewise took part of the same.' 'He became subject to death that He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil.' Here are reasons assigned for the Incarnation and the Death of Christ. He shared the sufferings of those whose Head He is. He overcame death, their common enemy, by submitting to it. He delivered them from the power of the devil. All orthodox schools, in formal language - tens of thousands of suffering people, in ordinary language - have confessed the force of the words. Instead of seeking to put Christ at a distance from themselves, by tasking their fancy to conceive of sufferings which, at the same moment, are pronounced inconceivable, they have claimed Him as entering into their actual miseries, as sharing their griefs. They believed that He endured death because it was theirs, and rose to set them free from it, because it was an evil accident of their condition, an effect of disorder, not of God's original order. They have believed that He rescued them out of the power of an enemy, by yielding to his power, not that He rescued them out of the power of God by paying a penalty to Him. Any notion whatever which interferes with this faith.....we have a right to repudiate as unorthodox, unscriptural, and audacious" (Essays.p.144-6)

One wonders if writers on the Atonement who are students of English theology have noticed this paragraph of Maurice? Two points are here made very clear:-

First - it is entirely the evil that explains the need for Christ's death, not anything in God. The sole meaning and purpose of the death is the deliverance of man from evil. It is in no sense an offering or satisfaction made to God.

Second - that death delivers man from evil, overcomes evil, by yielding to its power.

And I venture to suggest that this indicates the direction in the explanation of the Atonement will tend to move in the future.

CHAPTER III.

LEADING PRINCIPLES OF THE TWO WRITERS SHOWING THEIR AFFINITY WITH THE PATRISTIC THEORY OF RANSOM.

In the foregoing discussion the attempt has been made to gather under various points the actual teaching on the doctrine of Atonement to be found in Coleridge and Maurice respectively. Now in the present section of the work my purpose is to show that in those fundamental ideas which are common to the two writers, there is to be found a close affinity with that ancient theory to which this Thesis is designed to call fresh attention. It seems to me that the leading principles of both Coleridge and Maurice really show a closer resemblance to that theory - viz., the Patristic theory of Ransom - than to any other theory of the Atonement.

Coleridge and Maurice are both notoriously unsystematic. They are "theologians of the heart" - the thinking is pious rather than logical - and they are not always consistent in their statements; but from the details already given, I think the fundamental ideas of both on the Atonement might be summed up as follows:-

I. First of all, both Coleridge and Maurice are at one in holding that the Christian Religion centres in Redemption, "Christianity and Redemption," says Coleridge, "are synonymous terms"; and in the whole of his writings on religious topics, and equally in the voluminous works of Maurice, we find this everywhere assumed and recognised. Redemption - in the essebtial

and original significance of the word - is for both of them what the Atonement means. And this Redemption is entirely God's own act. God Himself in Christ is the Redeemer.

2. Both, again, are strong and definite in their teaching on the will. While they would alike disclaim any attempt to explain the presence of evil in the universe, they are perfectly clear as to the origin of the evil that affects man and from which he requires to be delivered. It is in the will. All sin is "original" sin for Maurice as well as for Coleridge - that is, sin originating in a will. At the same time, both writers have certain deep convictions as to the nature of the evil that is in the will and its power over the will. Both hint (Maurice, as we have seen, quite openly and emphatically) at an evil principle or Spirit acting on and in my will, not at all relieving me from the responsibility and guilt of the sin, but immensely strengthening the power of the evil will in me. I think both writers would repudiate the Pelagian position, "I can be good if I will"; and would agree with the Augustinian - "I could be good if I would, - but I won't". That is the real position. I can't move my will. My will is my own with all its sin and guilt - yet it is in bondage. There lies the need for Redemption.

3. Hence, third, both are equally emphatic and unmistakable in their assertion that it is this sin, this evil, this evil will and that which makes it evil and keeps it evil,- it is this and not anything in God's nature or character - that furnishes the real necessity for Christ's sufferings and death. Coleridge and Maurice are entirely at one and absolutely unequivocal in their teaching on this matter - the great WHY of the Atonement. "Cur Deus Homo"? It is the evil and the evil alone - not God

at all - it is "false and blasphemous" to say that God for any reason or necessity in Himself requires it.

There are implications here, of course, that will fall to be considered later; but it is evident that there is something in the main orthodox line of Atonement doctrine which our two theologians would both repudiate with scorn.

4. As to the HOW of the Atonement, the actual effect which Christ's death exercises upon the evil which has called it forth and how that death delivers and redeems the will from evil - the two writers appear somewhat to diverge, This is a matter however in which perhaps we recognise one of the mysteries of the Atonement and where full explanation is impossible, and certainly neither Coleridge nor Maurice has a finished and complete theory to offer.

Coleridge is content at one time to say, "factum est" - the Redemptive Act is transcendent: the effect of it is a re-birth, a re-orientation, so to speak, of the evil will, and he proceeds to discuss what we are competent to know of it. At another time he hints at a kind of mysterious"co-agency" between the Redeeming Spirit and the human will.

Maurice - if he were asked precisely how the death of Christ acts in delivering from evil, would no doubt answer the question by his theory of Identification and the Headship and Indwelling of Christ, whereby we perfectly surrender in Christ's perfect surrender - it being clearly understood, however, that according to Maurice the whole fact of the surrender and sacrifice of Christ has as its object the destruction of evil, not the satisfaction of God. It is a satisfaction to God only in the

sense that it is a matter of supreme satisfaction and "complacency" to God to see His own goodness and holiness reflected in humanity as represented by Christ. But as already indicated, this does not by any means embrace Maurice's whole thought on this matter of the effect of Christ's death on evil, as he has very clearly given expression to the profound idea that Christ's suffering and death is essentially a conquering by yielding.

See Appendix G.

This I think fairly represents the leading thoughts, and the general impression gained is that the essence of the Atonement is found in the idea of Redemption or Deliverance, rather than in that of Satisfaction or Expiation. It is this general tendency of their teaching that attracted me to these two writers. The whole bearing of their thought on the matter is distinctly in line with the conception that prevailed before Anselm launched on the world his idea of satisfaction paid to the Divine Honour. Coleridge and Maurice say - with the writers of the Patristic age - that the Atonement is essentially and entirely the deliverance of man, of the human will, and is to be explained from that point of view.

On the one hand, I find in their teaching a wholehearted repudiation of those theories of Atonement which attribute to it - in any sense whatever - an effect upon God, upon God's attitude to man, or His willingness or power to forgive. While such ideas may find expression here and there in these somewhat unmethodical writings, it is true that the main bearing of their teaching constitutes an emphatic and deliberate rejection of them.

On the other hand, that teaching certainly goes deeper than

the purely subjective thought of Moral Suasion as supplying the reason and purpose of the act of Atonement. Neither Coleridge nor Maurice can properly be classed under the Subjective or "Moral Influence" theory started by Abelard. This will appear more fully when I come later on to offer a criticism of that theory as inadequate to explain the meaning of the death of Christ, but it may here be said that there are certain vital elements in the teaching of both writers on the dictrine - their ideas on the human will, on the nature of evil and its power over the will, their concentration upon the thought of deliverance, etc.- which remove both Coleridge and Maurice from the purely subjective standpoint in Atonement doctrine. They both hold to an objective Atonement. The redemption of the will is something other than the persuasion of the will. The death of Christ is more than a supreme revelation - it is a supreme deliverance.

There is thus to be found in these writers, as it seems to me, a strong affinity with the ancient theory of Ransom, the essence of which is that the whole necessity for Christ's sacrifice lay in the captive state of man's will - this was the one and only possible method of deliverance. The picture of the Deity presented to us in their general conception of the Atonement is not that of a Sovereign God Who simply chooses this terrible method of supremely revealing His love and so winning over the rebellious will of man; not that of a Feudal Lord demanding that a debt of satisfaction be paid to His wounded honour; not that of a mysterious hidden Being whose inner "divine Necessities" or whose justice, holiness or righteous law, demands a sacrifice: but rather it is the very picture presented by Jesus Himself:

that of an all-loving Father striving for the deliverance of His chiddern, and striving with the only weapon possible, the Christian weapon, the victorious weapon of self-sacrifice - that yielding to evil which alone can overcome and destroy it.

Coleridge tells us more than once that his great object in discussing Redemption is to clear "this awful mystery from those too current misapprehensions of its nature and import" - especially those which would set it at variance with the law revealed in conscience, so the the doctrine is made to "contradict our moral instincts and intuitions"(Aids.253); and his very penetrating analysis of St Paul's doctrine (which I have described in the section on Coleridge) shows how strongly he repudiated all those ideas of satisfaction, expiation, payment of dect,etc., which would attribute the necessity of Christ's death to something in God's own nature.(Aids.267-27I) He makes out that the Act of Atonement is transcendent - beyond our comprehension - but he always speaks of it - in regard to its object and purpose - as the remedy for a diseased and corrupt will, it begets us into a new life, "in the redeemed it is a regeneration, a birth..... the germinal principle of a higher and enduring life." (266) It "conquers death"(267), it "destroys the objective reality of sin"(266).

In Coleridge the entire <u>direction</u> of the Act of Atonement is manward - it is man and his necessities, the dire necessities of man's diseased and corrupt condition, his captive state - that calls it forth; and that is the essence of the Patristic idea.

"Christianity and Redemption are synonymous terms", says Coleridge, and the word Redemption itself is illuminating: the New

Testament says "agorazein","lutran", "lutrosis", and Ransom is "lutron". To redeem, to buy back, to deliver - that is what Christ died for, that is what God sent Christ to die for, and for no other object.

Turning to Maurice, we find both in the "Theological Essays" and in the "Doctrine of Sacrifice" - as well as in the Letters - very many sayings on the Spirit of evil, man's bondage to it, and Christ's sacrifice as his deliverance from it, which seem to show, by the unmistakable conviction and earnestness with which they are uttered, that Maurice in his views did not stop short of the full New Testament conception of an Evil Spirit, an adversary both of God and man, who has man in his thrall, and from whom Christ's death alone can deliver him:- and which read exactly like a transcript in modern terms of the Patristic idea of a Ransom to the devil. But with a writer like Maurice - so all-comprehensive, tolerant and charitable as to feel that "all are right in what they affirm, wrong only in what they deny" - with such a writer one does not rely on any individual sayings or passages, but rather on the general bearing of his teaching, which is clear enough.

Maurice has by no means a pure and single theory on the Atonement. He is even more vague and diffuse than Coleridge. "Our unaccountable theologian," Pfleiderer calls him. "Maurice is not capable of taking a clear and logically consistent position." (Pfleiderer.Develop.of Theol.p.373) But the whole trend of his teaching on the Atonement is similar tothat of Coleridge, and is in essential affinity with the principles of the Ransom

theory. The atoning act is the act of God Himself in Christ, and it is entirely manward in its intention and effect - the whole movement is downwards from God to man, not in any sense upwards from man to God, as in the Anselmic tradition and all the various forms in which it has appeared. The entire purpose and necessity of the death of Christ is found - for Maurice as for Coleridge - in the deliverance of man from evil.

In the volume of "Theological Essays" he begins by showing how the "Theology of Consciousness" misleads men as to the doctrine of Atonement. We have various "consciousnesses" - with regard to sin, salvation, grace, etc. - and out of these "consciousnesses" or experiences we proceed to form systems regarding God's action which often outrage the moral conscience and reason. (Maurice has the same thought here that we find in Coleridge when he draws the distinction between the Act of Atonement itself and the effects of it as felt in the experience of men). "I wish to show," says Maurice, " that the orthodox faith as it is expressed in the Bible and the Creeds absolutely prevents us from acquiescing in some of these explanations of the Atonement which both in popular and scholastic teachings have been identified with it." (Theol.Essays.42) He then proceeds to give his own view, in words which I have already quoted in dealing with Maurice. The passage is on page 145 of the Essays, and is exceedingly important. "He overcame death, their common enemy, by submitting to it. He delivered them from the power of the devil. .....They have believed that He rescued them out of the power of an enemy by yielding to that power, not that He rescued them out of the hand of God by paying a penalty to Him."

The whole passage (as found on p.30 of this Thesis) speaks for

itself. In essential principle it is the Ransom theory; and it is no isolated utterance but is entirely characteristic of Maurice's prevailing conception of the doctrine. The passage shows, too, the impossibility of classing Maurice with those who hold the purely subjective theory of "Moral Influence". There is an objective act - an opus operatum - in Christ's Atonement. It is an objective Atonement, but the work is wrought not on God but on evil.

That Maurice's objection to the Satisfaction idea is as emphatic as that of Coleridge could be shown from numerous places in his writings, but I select the following as very clearly indicating his close affinity with the principle of Ransom:-

> "And thus another very unsightly, and to me quite portentous, imagination of modern divines, is shown to be utterly inconsistent with the faith which we and our forefathers have professed. There is said to have been a war in the Divine mind between justice and mercy. We are told that a great scheme was necessary to bring these qualities into reconciliation. When I attribute this doctrine to modern divines, I do not affirm that there may not be very frequent traces of it in the argumentative discourses of the ancient divines: but I mean that, with the strong belief which they had that an Evil Spirit was drawing them away both from mercy and righteousness,- was tempting them to be both unjust and hard-hearted - they had a practical witness against any notion of this kind, which we have lost or are losing." "As soon as we return to the practical faith of the old teachers,.....we shall know that there must be an All-Good on the one side, or that we shall be at the mercy of an All-Evil on the other."
> (Theol.Essays.49-50)

> "Do you ask how this act effected the purpose of redeeming any, or how many were included in the benefits of it? The question is indeed most difficult, if by redemption you mean <u>in any sense</u> the deliverance of man out of the hand of God, the procuring a change in His purpose or will; then there is need of every kind of subtle explanation to show how the means correspond to the end. But if you suppose that it is the spirit of a man which needs to be emancipated, a spirit fast bound with the chains of its own sins and fears, then I do not see what proof, save one, can be of any avail, that a certain scheme of redemption is effectual. Appeal directly to the captive,etc." (Doct. of Sac. 139-140)

It may be added that Maurice's whole doctrine of Sacrifice - which is perhaps his chief contribution to Atonement theory - constitutes a direct refutation of all juridical or satisfaction ideas. It is not God who, in any sense whatever, requires a sacrifice, but the evil in man which requires God to make a sacrifice if man is to be delivered. All sacrifice proceeds from God. The whole movement in the atoning act is downward from God to man.

I would go so far as to say that Maurice's treatment of the Atonement all through is a passionate plea for the truth lying in the Patristic theory - God Himself striving , from start to finish, for the redemption of man from evil.

Both Coleridge and Maurice would claim as theologians to belong to a "broad" or "liberal" school of Theology. They would scorn any "narrow" type of belief. In their own century and among their contemporaries they would claim to be "modern" thinkers, and certainly would refuse to be classed as adherents of any ancient theory whatever outside the Scriptures; yet, as I have tried to make clear, I find that, instinctively, the whole trend of their teaching on redemption moves definitely into line with the Patristic thought of Ransom - the theory of a "Ransom to the Devil".

I now proceed to an examination of that Theory itself.

CHAPTER IV

THE PATRISTIC THEORY OF ATONEMENT.

I. GENERAL. - It is not my purpose to deal with the whole doctrine of Redemption as we find it in the Patristic theology. Redemption through the Incarnation was the main idea, the special matter of Christ's atoning death being in the writers of that school subordinate to the wider question of the Incarnation, the Trinity, the Person of Christ. But so far as they put forward any definite explanation of the necessity for the death of Christ we find one fact assumed more or less by all the Fathers, both Greek and Latin, throughout the age - namely, that of a Ransom to the Devil. Details in the statement of this theory vary very greatly, but as an explanation of the actual need for Christ's sufferings and death in order to atonement, this was the prevailing orthodox view for almost a thousand years till it received its famous refutation at the hands of Anselm in the eleventh century.

The idea that the death of Christ on the Cross was really a ransom or price paid to Satan for the deliverance of man from his power was, amid considerable variety of detail, actually the dominant theory of the Atonement throughout the Patristic Age. It was the official or orthodox explanation (assumed by all the main writers) of the difficulty felt as to why Christ should have to suffer and die at all, a problem with which the Church was challenged by the Gnostics and other heretical teachers. The Patristic theologians were really more interested in the wider

fact of the Incarnation as being God's great method of redemption. But when they were compelled to define the church's position on the definite and very perplexing question - a question still asked by inquiring minds, young and old, and (as many would say) never satisfactorily answered - as to the actual necessity for an atoning death, the answer that first came to them and which continued to be held throughout the whole age, was this thought of a ransom that had to be paid. The Devil - the evil from which man was to be redeemed - demanded it as the price of redemption.

That was the thought, and it was inevitable that it should occur, for it seemed to be supplied to them directly by Scripture when the need arose.

The leading Scripture passage, of course, is Jesus' saying about the "Son of Man giving His life a ransom for many." J.K.Mozley in his "Doctrine of the Atonement" (p.103) says, for example, that when Origen was led to the formulation of his Ransom theory it was as an exegete interested in finding an answer to the question - to whom was the lutron paid? The saying of Jesus has naturally been greatly discussed and a useful account of the various interpretations by English and German theologians is given by Mozley, pp.45-50.

Other New Testament passages on which the Ransom theory was based are such as the following:-

> "That through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the Devil"(Heb.2.14.)
> (Next to the "Ransom" saying of Jesus this is perhaps quoted more often than any other Scripture passage)
> "Now is the judgement of this world, now shall the Prince of this world be cast out"(Jo.12.13)

"The Prince of this world is judged"(Jo.I6.II)

"Who gave Himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time"(I.Tim.26)

"Went and preached unto the spirits in prison"(I.Pet.3.I9.)

"The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world"(Jo.6.5I.)

"I saw Satan like lightening fall from heaven"(Lk.I0.I8)

"The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not"(2.Cor.4.4.)

"The prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience"(Eph.2.2.)

"The accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before God day and night"(Rev.I2.I0)

From such scriptures as these, from the whole New Testament teaching about Evil Spirits, and from the thought common in the Apostolic Fathers and Apologists of man being enslaved by evil demons and the powers of darkness, we come to Irenaeus towards the end of the second century, who took up this idea of ransom and was the first to make it, as Rashdall says, "a hard and fast theory". The first formulation of the Ransom idea as a definite theory may be traced to Irenaeus, although he certainly held it along with ideas of Substitution, Expiation, and also his original conception of Recapitulatio - with all of which it is really incompatible.

Origen, however, is the first christian theologian to teach clearly that the death of Christ is a ransom paid to the devil in exchange for the souls of men, forfeited by sin; that the devil overreached himself in the transaction owing to the perfect purity of the soul of Christ, which it was torture for him to try to retain; and that thus Christ triumphed over the devil. Rashdall says that in the whole account of the matter in Origen, when allowance is made for rhetorical expressions, there is

nothing really grotesque or unethical, irreligious or unphilosophical from the point of view of one who believes in the universe as a scene of conflict between good and evil spirits. (Idea of Atonement.p.262)

While Rashdall - in the interests of his own purely subjective explanation of the Atonement - claims that the general tendency of the Church's teaching in the Patristic age even in the West, but especially in the greatest Greek Fathers, is that Christ's death saves from sin only because it reveals God's love and awakens penitence in the sinner, the fact is that these teachers were too wise to say that this gives the whole explanation of Christ's death. They felt that there was more in it - a deeper necessity for it - than mere revelation; and we find this thought of a ransom, a deliverance of man, and not merely a persuasion of man, in them all. From Irenaeus in the second century right on to John of Damascus in the eighth (in whom some of the crudest elements of the theory appear), it will scarcely be denied that the idea of a"Ransom to the Devil" is assumed as the accepted formula whenever an explanation is to be given of the actual necessity for an atoning death.

2. GREGORY OF NYSSA. - To get what the theory actually is I take, as a representative writer, Gregory of Nyssa (c.335-395), in whose pages we have perhaps the clearest and most careful account of it.

Gregory's statement of the theory is to be found in his "Oratio Catechetica Magna", an apologetic or defensive summary of Christian truth. The object of this really beautiful work is to vindicate the Christian scheme of redemption against heresies

of various kinds. The facts of the Trinity, the Divine Logos, the Creation of Man, Free Will, the Origin of Evil, and especially the Plan of Redemption through the Incarnation, are all elaborately argued and defended, - the Ransom theory coming in as one element in the whole scheme. What I am concerned with is the section of the work contained in chaps. xv-xxvi, where we have the finest and most complete (as well as the most reasonable) statement of the theory that has come down to us. Its mythological crudities are, to some extent at least, corrected and softened in Gregory's exposition by his fine sense of literary expression and his instinctively philosophical turn of thought.

In his Prologue to the work I have mentioned Gregory shows that, in order to ensure the acceptance of the Faith, a definite system of Christian truth is required, but such system must be capable of being stated in different ways so as to meet the different types of heretical opinion; and he clearly indicates what opponents he has in view: "No one would try to set Sabellius right by the same kind of instructions as would suit the Anomoean. The controversy with the Manichee is profitless against the Jew,etc." (473)

After a subtle exposition, in chaps.i-iv, of the doctrine of the Trinity against both the Jew and the Greek, there follows, up to the xivth chapter, an elaborate argument as to the purpose, the necessity and the reasonableness of the Incarnation. Here we have the creation of man, with the gift of freedom and the consequent introduction of evil. It was necessary that man should be created with something of the divine in him and also

with an immortal nature in order fully to enjoy God's goodness. But the opponent will naturally ask, Where is this divine resemblance, this immortality? Man as we know him is of brief existence, subject to passions, full of suffering. This is answered, of course, by reference to the supreme gift of freedom: "He Who made man for the participation of His own peculiar good .....would never have deprived him of that most excellent and precious of all goods; I mean the gift implied in being his own master and having a free will."(c.v) How comes it then that man, endowed with such excellent qualities, should exchange them for the worse? Gregory is very clear and decisive as to how the evil in man originates: "The reason is plain. No growth of evil has its origin in the Divine will. Vice would be blameless were it inscribed with the name of God as its maker and father". - (There is a plain truth here not always grasped apparently by certain schools of later theology) - "Evil is in some way engendered from within, springing up in the will at that moment when there is a retrocession in the soul from the beautiful"(c.v) "It is not possible to form any other notion of the origin of vice than as the absence of virtue....We say that non-entity is only logically opposed to entity, and in the same way the word vice is opposed to the word virtue, not as being any existence in itself, but only as becoming thinkable by the absence of the better."(c.vi)

Here we have the profound idea that evil in its ultimate origin and nature can only be thought of as negative - the "principle of discretion", as Whitehead would say, in a universe of which God is the "principle of concretion".

There is then no Divine causality in relation to evil. It is man's free will that chooses the worse in preference to the better But what is the cause of this error of judgement? "All our discussion tends to this point". Here we first come upon Gregory's mythological conception of the devil. He is that power or "angel of the earth" created to hold together and sway the earthly regions. (This is a thought that Origen has developed: there are certain nations assigned to the sway of the devil.(Cont.Cels.v) This being, says Gregory, comes to every man - although how one created for all good should first come to fall into this passion of envy "it is not part of my present business to discuss." But he says, "when this power has closed his eyes to the good and the ungrudging, like one who in the sunshine lets his eyelids drop over his eyes and sees only darkness, in this way that being also, by his very unwillingness to see the good, becomes cognisant of the contrary of goodness. Now this is envy..... The bias to vice generated by this envy is the constituted road to all those evils which have been since displayed." Actuated by this original envy, this being "by his crafty skill decieves man and circumvents him, persuading him to become his own murderer by his own hands."(c.vi) This is the beginning of man's captivity to the Devil. His plan is, by mingling evil in man's will, to withdraw man from God's fellowship and protection and to get him into his own power.

Gregory then goes on to show how only God Who created man could redeem him from this captive state; and in doing so, he details his great argument as to the possibility and reasonableness of the Incarnation of the Divine Logos into human flesh.

The important question follows (c.xiv):- "Why did the Deity

descend to such humiliation? Our faith is staggered to think that God, transcending all glory of greatness, wraps Himself up in the base covering of humanity."

In chap.xv he proceeds to answer the question by showing first of all how the reason is found in the love of God to man, which is a special characteristic of the Divine nature. The diseased called for a healer, the lost for a Saviour. These wants appealed to God's love. Then comes the objection, why it was not possible for Him Who created all things out of nothing to effect this deliverance of man by a single command of His will, without Himself having to stoop and suffer?

Origen deals with this same question (Cont.Cels.iv): "Supposing it was so (that God should destroy evil in man's heart at a single blow, causing virtue to spring up there), what then? How will our assent to the truth be in that case praiseworthy?"

Gregory's answer to this objection -- why God did not destroy evil and deliver man by a single fiat of His will - is first of all to show that it was not at all derogatory to the excellence of the Divine nature to descend into human life, forasmuch as the imperfection of that bodily life of man was not a weakness, only vice is a weakness, and God incarnate had no participation in vice; therefore the method adopted was morally cohsonant with God's nature. He then goes on to elaborate his idea of a ransom being paid in the incarnation and death of Christ, proving not only the moral fitness of God's method but the necessity of it.

In entering on this argument Gregory begins by showing that all God's attributes - His justice as well as His wisdom and power and goodness - must be exhibited in His method of deli-

ring man. "As good, then, the Deity entertains pity to fallen
n; as wise, He is not ignorant of the means for his recovery;
ile a just decision must also form part of that wisdom"(c.xxi).
Thus we come to the kernal of the theory. "What then, under
ese circumstances, is justice? It is the not exercising any
bitrary power over him who has us in captivity, nor, by tear-
g us away by a violent exercise of force from his hold, thus
aving some colour for a just complaint to him who enslaved man
rough sensual pleasure. For as they who have bartered away
eir freedom for money are the slaves of those who have pur-
ased them.....on the same principle, now that we had volun-
rily bartered away our freedom, it was requisite that no
bitrary method of recovery, but the one consonant with justice
ould be devised by Him Who in His goodness had undertaken our
scue. Now this method is, in a measure, this: to make over
the master of the slave whatever ransom he may agree to ac-
pt for the person in his possession." (c.xxiii)
In Gregory's view, then, God's method of redemption takes the
rm of a definite transaction with Satan, God actually coming
terms with Satan regarding man - a view akin to the idea of
e prologue to the Book of Job. It is highly mythological, but
Gregory's exposition of it there is beauty in the myth, and
fair show both of reason and of reverence in the details.

He proceeds in cc.xxiii-xxvi to expound these details of the
ansaction under the following three points:-
(i) What would Satan be willing to accept as a price for the
demption of his slave? It must be something higher and better,
that he would gain in the exchange and thus foster his

liar passion of pride. The Incarnate Son of God alone, with miraculous powers, could satisfy this condition. "The enemy, lding in Him such power, saw also in Him the opportunity for nce in the exchange upon the value of what he held. For this on he chooses Him as a ransom for those who were shut up in prison of death."(c.xxiii)

re we have the peculiar note of this theory as found in gory - and also prevailingly in Origen himself and other ers of the Patristic school - namely, that the ransom or debt in Christ's death was paid to the Devil. The essence of the ge introduced by Anselm's criticism of this theory later on that it was paid to God, a debt of satisfaction to God's ded honour.)

t as the enemy would have been afraid to look upon uncloud- Deity, Christ was sent in the lowly form of human flesh yet essing miraculous power, so that Satan could look on Him as bject of desire but not of fear. Thus God's attributes of dness wisdom and justice are all manifested in the transac- . "His choosing to save man is a testimony of His goodness; making the redemption of the captive a matter of exchange bits His justice; while the invention whereby He enabled enemy to apprehend that of which he was before incapable a manifestation of supreme wisdom."(c.xxiii)

t this point Gregory introduces his famous metaphor of the and the bait which was laid hold of and elaborated by some the later writers. "The Deity was hidden under the veil of our ure, that so, as with a ravenous fish, the hook of the Deity nt be gulped down along with the bait of the flesh, and thus,

EDINBURGEN EX BIBL

life being introduced into the house of death, etc." (cxxiv)

(ii) Gregory is quite aware that this amounts to a deception on God's part in His dealing with Satan. God "got within the lines of the enemy" by fraud, veiling what was really divine in human form. But he proceeds to excuse this and stoutly maintains the justice and wisdom of the whole transaction. It is the essential quality of justice to give every one his due, and of wisdom to maintain unswervingly the aim of love to man while not departing in the least degree from justice. This is what God did. "By the reasonable rule of justice, he who first practised deception receives in return that very treatment the seeds of which he had himself sown by his own free will; he who first deceived man by the bait of densual pleasure is himself deceived by the presentment of the human form. But as regards the aim and purpose of what took place, a change in the direction of the nobler is involved; for whereas he, the enemy, effected his deception for the ruin of our nature, He Who is at once the just the good and the wise one, used His device - in which there was deception - for the salvation of him who had perished." (c.xxvi)

(iii) There is a third point of detail. Gregory even contemplates through this transaction (as Origen had done) the redemption of the Devil himself. Not only is benefit conferred on the lost one, but also on him who had wrought the ruin. As in the refining of gold the worthless material is consumed away in the fire, "in the same way when death and corruption had grown into the nature of the author of evil, the approach of the divine power, acting like fire and making the unnatural accretion to disappear, thus by purgation of the evil becomes a blessing

to that nature, though the separation is agonising. Therefore the adversary himself will not be likely to dispute that what took place was both just and salutary, that is if he shall have attained to a perception of the boon." (c.xxvi)

Gregory concludes his discussion thus:- "These and the like benefits the great mystery of the Incarnation bestows. For in those points in which He was mingled with humanity, passing as He did through all the accidents proper to human nature, such as birth, rearing, growing up and advancing even to the taste of death, He accomplished all the results before mentioned, both freeing man from evil and healing even the intruducer of evil himself. For the chastisement however painful of moral disease, is a healing of its weakness." (c.xxvi)

3. DISCUSSION OF THE THEORY. ITS PERMANENT VALUE.

It will be asked, why seek to revive such a theory as this, consisting as it does in the conceptions of a mythology long since passed away?

The Patristic school of theology had its own great contribution to make to Christian doctrine, and its profound ideas on the Incarnation for example have their permanent and essential place in the history of that doctrine. But this special theory put forward by these writers as to the method - this whole idea of a ransom paid by God to the Devil as the method of redemption would surely, if it could taken seriously, be entirely repugnant to modern thought.

Let it be said at once that I reject the whole theory in the

mythological form in which it has come down to us. No one could wish to set the hands of the clock so far back. But I retain and desire to call fresh attention to the principle that underlies the theory, because I believe it is the neglect of that principle and the failure to call in its aid that makes that which is the crucial problem in the Atonement - the first and deepest question that leaps to the mind whenever the fact of Atonement is seriously considered either by the eager young Christian inquirer or by the ripe theologian - unanswerable. That question, of course, is: why Christ should have to die.

The answer which the Ransom theory long ago gave to the question is one that has been too much left out of account but one that must be reckoned with, for I venture to think it is the answer which above all others best satisfies the mind if one thinks of and tries to explain the Atonement as an act of God. Why should it be necessary for Christ to die? The Ransom theory answers - and so far as I know it is the only one which does give this plain and simple answer - <u>because evil demanded it</u>, sin demanded it, it was the only way in which evil could be dealt with and overcome. That is the principle underlying the theory, a simple but extremely illuminating principle, <u>the power of evil</u>, the actual reality of evil over against God, and its power to determine God Himself, in His will to redemption, into one particular line of action. Denney says that the final merit of <u>Anselm's</u> theory is that it has such a profound sense of the seriousness of sin. But it seems to me that this is even more true of a theory that makes sin the enslavement of man and the powerful enemy of God than of one which regards it as the infringement of God's Honour: the Ransom theory may limit God's

power; the Satisfaction theory limits His love.

Denney speaks of certain "divine necessities" which require a propitiation. What are these? It is here that the baffling difficulty really lies. According to the general assumption of the dominant theory of Atonement the ultimate necessity for this dire and extreme method God had to resort to - the death of Christ on the Cross - seems to lie wholly in God Himself - be it His honour and dignity, or His holiness, His justice, His righteousness and moral government, His infinite but offended and wounded love -- somehow the necessity must lie on the side of God. May one say - hinc illae lacrymae? Is it not possible that hence may at least partly arise those terrific, endless, and always consciously baffled wrestlings on this question on the part of some of the greatest theologians of modern times, and that a glance at what this old theory means might bring some relief?

How to construe the fact that God apparently in some way requires satisfaction, and also the fact that the death of Christ can in some way supply that satisfaction, - is a problem of which I frankly confess I have seen no solution that appears to please even the propounder of it himself. To say that the real reason why Christ had to die is to be found (in any sense whatever) in God's need for satisfaction will never satisfy either the writer or the reader on the Atonement.

Hence the failure of what Dr.John Oman calls - "the honest blunderings of Dr.Dale, the passionate scholarship of Dr.Denney, the super-subtlety of Dr.Forsyth, the refined elusiveness of Dr.Moberly" - really to answer the great question about the need

for an atoning death. What I feel is that we shall never find the reason for it in God. And why I turn to the Ransom theory is that it refers us to evil for the reason. This is nothing new or startling, but it is something too much lost sight of. The purest essence of that old Patristic idea is that evil had power to compel this supreme sacrifice on the part of God if His will to redemption was to be carried out. And the only purpose of any revival of that ancient theory would be to ask for a glance once more in that direction to see if some light at least may not thereby be shed upon the darkest point of the problem.

The main Scriptural basis on which the theory rests is, as has been indicated, the famous "Ransom" saying of Jesus(Mk.10.45,&c) Rashdall in his great book "The Idea of Atonement" gives a very interesting and scholarly discussion of this passage. He is hard put to it to explain the saying, as it does not easily fit in with his own purely subjective theory, and certainly would like it to be dropped altogether as not genuine; but he says, "if we must say in black and white what the benefit was which Christ expected His death to assist in procuring for many, it would doubtless be admission to the Kingdom of Heaven." (p.36) Rashdall declares that to understand the words of Jesus here as meaning that apart from His death there could be no forgiveness, would be to make His teaching at this point entirely inconsistent with what He elsewhere says about the love of God and His willingness to forgive the sinner on the one condition of repentence. But it seems to me that all through this discussion Rashdall fails to see that a ransom, a price, a redeeming death may be necessary quite irrespectively of God's willingness to

forgive. From the point of view which I uphold the ransom paid in Christ's death would not be for the purpose of procuring God's forgiveness or making Him willing to forgive, but rather for that of making man capable of receiving the forgiveness which God is always freely offering. Rashdall rightly says that the constant teaching of Jesus is that repentence is the sole condition of forgiveness, and to say in this one instance that deliverance from sin is dependent on His death would be inconsistent with this teaching. But it may be replied that His constant teaching of repentance as the sole condition of forgiveness (and this certainly is His constant teaching) is not inconsistent with the idea that His death is necessary as a ransom. Repentence is the sole condition of God's offer of forgiveness. That is true - but "what if one cannot repent?" Rashdall speaks about Christ never attributing an "expiatory" or a "substitutionary" value to His death. I agree. But what about a redemptive value? Expiation and substitution are both entirely incompatible with the idea of "ransom" - but it means redemption. There is a great difference. An expiatory or a substitutionary death would be for the sake of God, God requires it. A redemptive death, a death of "ransom", would be entirely for the sake of man, the evil in man demands it.

I have no desire to build too much on an isolated saying of Jesus which may at best be of doubtful authenticity, but I think Rashdall makes too much of the irrelevance of this passage to the context and of its incongruence with Jesus' main teaching. Our Lord is certainly speaking of His death as some kind of service: may He not have had in His mind, after all said and done,

a service consisting in deliverance - redemption, the highest kind of service one could render another?

I find Rashdall insisting over and over again on the fact that Christ's teaching on the need for repentence as the only condition of forgiveness is clear and indubitable, and therefore He cannot mean that His death is necessary to forgiveness. But I feel that there is here either something less than ingenuous or some confusion of thought. We must distinguish between God's willingness to forgive and that forgiveness taking effect on man; and while Christ's teaching is as clear as day that the forgiveness of God is subject to no condition whatever saving only that of repentence, it seems to me that His references to His death, both in the passage under discussion and in others, very naturally bear the sense that that death has a profound significance in relation to man's forgivableness, to man's will and power to repent; and from this point of view I confess I do not see so much difficulty as Rashdall seems to do as to the appropriateness and relevance of the "ransom" saying.

I have stated above my reason for seeking to direct fresh attention to the Ransom theory, -- namely that it finds the necessitating cause of Christ's death in the evil, not in God.

Now this of course raises many questions: what evil then is - its nature and origin; whether there is a spirit of evil, an evil person or power apart from Man's own evil will; whether we are to think of an ultimate dualism in the moral universe or

rather to trace the final causality of evil to God Himself. Such questions have been debated from the beginning and will no doubt continue always to attract the speculative mind. Some of them will inevitably claim attention when I come to defend the Ransom theory against its only serious rival - namely, that started by Abelard; but the value I see in the theory does not depend on the solution of these questions. The Patristic writers unquestionably held the New Testament view that there is an actual Spirit of evil - an antagonist, an enemy both of God and man; they held this view in a crude and literal form which is quite alien to our ways of thinking; but this does not affect the principle of the theory: that there is power in evil to determine God's action in redeeming man, and that it is this power of evil that calls forth the death of Christ as the only possible method of accomplishing that redemption.

This is the one principle that attracts me to that ancient theory. I think it is the only theory that seems to embody that principle <u>without reserve</u>. The principle is simple, clear and satisfying, and (as already pointed out) I find Coleridge and Maurice, of all modern theologians who wish to profess a scriptural and orthodox position in this matter, most essentially in line with it, in the main tendency of their teaching. What I am opposed to is that strange, unhappy, perplexed reserve in the minds of modern writers on the Atonement - Denney and Forsyth, for example - as to the real need for an atoning death; as if God required the death for some mysterious reason of His own in order to forgive sin. I object to this, and I find this absent - nay, explicitly repudiated in both Coleridge and Maurice. The

The reason for the death is found wholly in the evil to be overcome by it, the evil from which man is to be delivered.

Coleridge wants to isolate the transcendent Divine act in redemption; he does not presume to explain it, but he makes perfectly clear his desire to free the act from all those wrong ideas and motives which theologians have attributed to it, satisfaction, debt, expiation, propitiation, etc., as if the object and purpose of God's own act in redemption were reflexive -- turning back, so to speak, and affecting God Himself. To Coleridge the act itself is a mystery - factum est - but certainly its plain and simple object is the redemption of man from evil.

Maurice also - amid the multifarious and not always consistent views of his too hospitable mind - is undoubtedly horrified at the idea of any kind of sacrifice which contains the remotest hint of being aimed at the satisfaction or propitation of God. All sacrifice is on God's part, and its single aim is man's redemption from evil.

Meantime I proceed to defend the Ransom theory against that great system which gave it its final quietus and has kept it out of sight for some eight hundred years - the doctrine of Anselm.

CHAPTER V

ANSELM'S REFUTATION OF THE PATRISTIC THEORY.

I. CUR DEUS HOMO?

The magnificent doctrinal structure reared by Anselm in the end of the eleventh century fairly caught the imagination and carried the day. "If any one Christian work outside of the canon of the New Testament may be described as 'epoch-making' it is the Cur Deus Homo of Anselm"(Mozley.Doct.of Atone.p.125) In its essential principle his explanation of the Atonement is the one that prevails in the main orthodox line up to the present day.

Now the Ransom theory had been an answer to the one great crucial question why Christ had to suffer and die, and when Anselm came upon the scene he took up this question and at least attacked it in the most thorough and searching manner:- "The question is why God could not have saved man in another ~~manner~~ way, or if He could, why He chose this way, for it not only seems unbefitting for God to save man in this way, but it is not clear of what avail that death is for man. For it is a marvellous thing if God is so pleased with, or in such want of, the blood of an innocent person, that unless He is put to death, He cannot or will not spare the guilty."(Cur Deus Homo.p.61) The real heart of the problem could be more completely laid bare. Anselm at least appreciates the question, whether or not his own answer is better than the one it supersedes.

The solution hitherto had been found by reference to the Devil. Anselm by his powerful thinking and by the splendid system he

evolved changed the whole scene, and for the true answer to the question made men think not of the Devil at all but of God and His "divine necessities". This is the essence of the epoch-making change.

It is not necessary to go through the theory of Anselm in detail. It is expounded in all histories of Dogma and treatises on the Atonement, and the broad lines of it are well known. Denney calls the Cur Deus Homo "the truest and greatest book on the Atonement that has ever been written"(At.and Mod.Mind.116) On the other hand Harnack says:- "No theory so bad had ever before his day been given out as ecclesiastical"(Hist.of Dogma. vi.78.Quoted by Mozley.126)

Anselm's great idea is that of an infinite satisfaction for an infinite debt. God has suffered a loss of honour by man's disobedience, and this by an eternal necessity must be followed either by the utter punishment of the sin or by the payment to God of an equivalent for the loss He has suffered - which is far beyond man's power. This payment of an equivalent for the loss to God's honour he calls satisfaction. Who can render this satisfaction to God? None but man ought to do it, none but God can do it; therefore the satisfaction is made by the God Man. Moreover, the voluntary sacrifice of Himself by the God Man is more than He owed to God. It deserves a recompence or reward, and the reward given to Him is God's forgivenness extended to men.

Here are a few salient passages from Cur Deus Homo showing the points of the argument:-

"Everyone who sins ought to render back to God the honour he has taken away, and this is the

satisfaction which every sinner ought to make to God" (64). "If there is nothing greater or better than God, there is nothing more righteous than that highest righteousness which preserves His honour in the arrangement of things, and that is nothing else than God Himself.....It is necessary therefore that either the honour taken away be repaid or punishment follow; otherwise either God will be unjust to Himself, or He will be powerless to secure either alternative - a thing it is wicked even to imagine"(68-9). "I suppose you will not doubt this too, that satisfaction must be made according to the measure of sin"(95). "What therefore will you pay to God for your sin? .....If I owe to Him myself and all I can give, even when I do not sin, lest I should sin, I have nothing to render to Him in compensation for sin"(97). "But this good (of man) cannot be accomplished unless there be someone to pay to God in compensation for the sin of man something greater than everything that exists except God.....There is no one therefore who can make this satisfaction except God Himself. But no one <u>ought</u> to make it except man; otherwise man does not make satisfaction. If therefore as is certain it is needful that that heavenly state be perfected from among men, and this cannot be unless the above mentioned satisfaction be made, which no one <u>can</u> make except God, and no one <u>ought</u> to make except man, it is necessary that one who is God-Man should make it"(II9-20). "Let us now examine, as far as we can, for what great reason man's salvation follows from His death.....You will not think that He Who freely gives to God so great a gift ought to be without a recompence?.....What then shall be recompenced to One in need of nothing, to whom there is nothing that can be

given or forgiven?.....To whom could (the Father) assign the fruit and recompence of His death more suitably than to those for whose salvation (as truthful reasoning has taught us) He made Himself man, and to whom (as He said) by His death He gave an example of dying on behalf of righteousness?"(I70-2)

That is the theory. Mozley says of it (op.cit.I28):- "Negatively, the outspoken repudiation of any rights of the Devil is enough to mark a turning point for Latin thought; positively, the necessity fot Christ's death becomes for the first time absolute - as a satisfaction to God. We cannot but perceive in the working out of the theory the influence of contemporary feudal ideas as to the relation of king and subject, together with juridical conceptions drawn from the customs of Germanic law and the penitential system of Latin theology".

2. DISCUSSION OF ANSELM'S IDEA. DENNEY.

This theory essentially prevailed, as already indicated, through the Scholastic period, through the great period of the Reformation theology, and up to the present hour.

(Rashdall says: "In St.Thomas's treatment of the Atonement no new idea emerges." (op.cit.373)
"There is no new thought in Luther about the death of Christ".(398)

And the whole of this Scholastic, Reformation, Modern-Orthodox view may be seen summed up in terms of our present day thinking and feeling in a beautiful passage in Denney's "Christian Doct. of Reconciliation", pp.234-5. I wish to quote the passage because, while it shows the Satisfaction theory at its best, it also makes plain its fatal weakness and may serve to lead up to

what is to be said in answer to Anselm.

> Denney says:- "The work of Christ is not designed to impress men simpliciter.....It is designed to produce in them through penitence God's mind about sin. It cannot do this simply as an exhibition of unconditioned love. It can only do it as the exhibition or demonstration of a love which is itself ethical and looks to ethical issues. But the only love of this description is love which owns the reality of sin by submitting humbly and without rebellion to the divine reaction against it; it is love doing homage to the divine ethical necessities which pervade the nature of things and the whole order in which men live. These divine ethical necessities are in the strictest sense objective. They are independent of us, and they claim and ~~receive~~ receive homage from Christ in His work of reconciliation, whether that work does or does not produce upon men the impression which is its due. This is an objective Atonement. It is a homage paid by Christ to the moral order of the world established and upheld by God; a homage essential to the work of reconciliation, for unless men are caught into it, and made participant of it somehow, they cannot be reconciled; but a homage at the same time which has value in God's sight, and therefore constitutes an objective atonement, whether any particular person is impressed by it or not. Even if no man should ever say, 'Thou, O Christ, art all I want; more than all in Thee I find', - God says it. Christ and His work have this absolute value for the Father, whatever this or that individual may think of them;..... It is because divine necessities have had homage done to them by Christ, that the way is open for sinners to return to God through Him."

If the last sentence means anything it means that God needs to be reconciled before He can forgive man, an idea which Denney repeats more than once, but which is not found in the New Testament. It lies at the basis of this whole Satisfaction theory.

Now this is a fine passage and very characteristic of the writer, but in reading it I am driven more and more to the Ransom theory for the fresh air of reality. Here (in Denney) God pays homage to His own divine necessities in sending Christ to die. God pays homage to Himself, God satisfies Himself - for Denney makes quite clear that the whole work of Christ is the work of

God: it is God Himself Who is acting - reconciling the world unto Himself - in Christ; all that Christ does He does absolutely according to the Father's will. And here, Christ's death, which is entirely by God's appointment, somehow satisfies God. Its purpose is to satisfy God - even if no man is affected by it. But is it not the case that that death has some effect on evil, apart from any satisfying of God - except of course that God is satisfied to see evil overcome? And was it not to attain that effect that God sent forth Christ to die? I cannot but feel there is a missing element in the whole structure. Denney seems to picture a kind if divine complacency within a closed circle from which both man, and the evil in man to be overcome, are excluded. God is absolutely satisfied with Christ's death, whether it takes effect on any individual or not. There must then be an artificial extension to man of this absolute value which Christ's death has for God. I can only gather from [redacted] Denney's words that, on account of the value which He finds in Christ's death, God extends His pardoning grace to men. This is Anselm to the letter - but surely it is as alien to our ways of thought to day as the ransom to the Devil is. To my mind it is much more so, for I certainly feel there must be some actual reason compelling God to take such a method of redeeming man, some object to be attained by the drastic expedient of sending forth Christ to die, an object that can in no wise be described in any terms of satisfaction to God Himself. The simple solution is that evil was that cause - the overcoming of evil was that object, evil was such that there was no other way of dealing with it - which amounts to the Ransom theory.

CHAPTER VI.

ANSWER TO ANSELM.

What survived of Anselm's theory was not the details of his argument but his main idea that God requires satisfaction in order to forgive sin, and that this satisfaction is afforded by Christ's sacrifice. This is the great thought that comes from Anselm and prevails throughout the history of the doctrine. But this is what I maintain requires to be looked into afresh. Is it really so? Is the effect of Christ's death - the effect it is intended to produce and does produce - an effect upon God? The influence of Christ's sacrifice on God may be said to be the fundamental principle in Atonement theory from Anselm onwards.

Now the obvious weaknesses of this great system have often been pointed out. Indeed Socinus long ago exposed one of the most glaring faults when he said that the whole idea of satisfaction is incompatible with forgiveness. The main faults and inconsistencies of the system have been brought out in detail by many writers, J.K.Mozley, Denney, Rashdall and others, and need not be dwelt on here. It is the main idea of the theory that I would seek to answer, that fundamental assumption in which the epoch-making change consisted, namely, that God requires satisfaction, and that Christ's death supplies this satisfaction. Anselm shows a strong sense of the necessity for satisfaction - a necessity that lies in God Himself. His whole aim is to show that there was no other way. If man was to be saved there was something in the Divine nature that had to be

satisfied, and could only be satisfied through the Incarnation and Passion of Christ. This is Anselm's case, and this is the fundamental error.

There are two questions: First, does God require satisfaction? Is there some work that must be wrought on God, something that must be changed, some impediment that must be removed, before God can forgive? — And second, can the death of Christ accomplish this object?

I. DOES GOD REQUIRE SATISFACTION?

Anselm answers in the affirmative, and it is this Anselmic obsession that makes true of all theories of the Atonement in the orthodox line from the Scholastic and Reformation theologians up to Dr.Denney and Dr.Forsyth what Mozley says of Kaftan: "It is when Kaftan faces the question of the necessity of the death of Christ in the work of salvation that a certain obscurity clouds his thought"(Mozley.170). Obscurity will always cloud our thought on that one crucial question, and we shall make the whole problem more baffling than it need be, if we follow Anselm in assuming that the necessity for Christ's death must lie in God; that God - somehow - has to be satisfied, reconciled, changed, appeased, made willing to forgive, or that a way has to be opened in God's own nature in order that His forgiveness may flow out freely to men.

If this is in any sense true, then a dualism in God cannot possibly be escaped. Anselm does strive to avoid a crude opposition between God and Christ, but in his system, or in any system which follows him in assuming the necessity to be in God, it is impossible to avoid a dualism, a division, within

he nature of God. His love is not free to act. There is an opposition in God between love and something else. And this other thing must be dealt with, satisfied, overcome.

Now if God is looked upon as pure love flowing out in forgiveness and that love be then seen to be impeded by some obstacle which must be overcome and destroyed in order that the forgiving love may be effective and accomplish its object - we have a clear and intelligible view of the Atonement: I would say, Christ's view and the true view; and we can understand the necessity for such a dire expedient as the Cross, which is fully and wholly willed both by the Father and the Son in order to accomplish the object and remove the impediment. But if we have no such thing, but rather an impediment within the Father Himself, there arises a situation - I would call it the "Anselmic obsession" - the effort to explain which has led Dale, McLeod Campbell, Moberly, Denney, Forsyth and many others into an ingenuity of argumentation which is little short of torturing. In the whole argument there seems to me to be a deliberate (or at least consistent) neglect of that which can alone shed light on the problem - the evil in man as the obstacle, the power of this evil to call forth this sacrifice on God's part, and the effect of God's sacrifice upon the evil.

An "objective" Atonement is insisted upon, some object aimed at and attained in Christ's death. What is that object? The Satisfaction theory says, God is the object. The Ransom theory says, Evil is the object. The former will always lead to impenetrable obscurity and the insoluble problem of a dualism in God's nature. The latter is at least plain and intelligible,

and does supply a satisfactory reason for the divine sacrifice. I maintain that the Atonement is truly "objective" although the effect of it is not upon God. God did not send forth His Son to die in order to satisfy Himself or His own "divine necessities"; but to accomplish a very definite and single object - the destruction of evil. I wish to retain an objective Atonement and yet to abandon altogether the idea of satisfying God.

Denney comes perilously near to the unscriptural idea that Christ's death reconciles God to man.

> "It is natural that St.Paul in the few places in which he speaks of reconciliation should make God its author and man its object; but it is not less natural nor less legitimate for the christian who feels that he owes to Christ his experience of God's pardoning love to say that through Christ he possesses a reconciled God and Father..... Reduced to its simplest expression, what an objective Atonement means is that but for Christ and His passion God would not be to us what He is."(Doct.of Recon.238-9)

I cannot agree to this in Denney's sense. He means that God's attitude to us - His love to us - His forgiveness extended toward us, is somehow different owing to Christ and His passion. I say no. Christ's passion does not in any way change God's love to us, but it makes that love capable of taking effect upon us by reason of what it does with us - with the evil in us, not with God. The simplest construction is to say that Christ's passion delivers us, and therefore opens the way for God's forgiveness (which suffers no change) to accomplish its object. Denney speaks of God "working for the winning again of the offender against love"(237); Yes, but in working for the winning of the offender, does God have to work only with Himself - to work against Himself? Is it not much simpler and truer to understand that God is working and striving and agonising not against anything in Himself at all, but against the offence -

in seeking to win the offender? A glance at the Ransom theory would ease the strain of Denney's effort here and in many other passages.

Of course I know that God is holy, is "of purer eyes than to behold iniquity"; that sin is hateful in God's eyes and painful to Him, and that to forgive it must be a costly and tragic business. That is true of any pure and loving personality. But what is God to do? He wishes man to be saved and His holy purpose for man attained. Therefore, for one thing, He cannot punish the sinner -- which would mean annihilating the race and defeating God's purpose - "God repented Him that He had made man." I can imagine Him inflicting pain on man to purge out the sin; I can imagine Him forgiving the sinner as an earthly father would do; I can imagine Him destroying and wiping out the sin by an omnipotent act of divine power; all these are possible thoughts: the one impossible thought is that He should require the death of the Innocent, or that such a death could accomplish anything so far as God Himself is concerned. But the death of the Innocent is there to be explained. This leads to the second question.

2. CAN THE DEATH OF CHRIST SATISFY GOD?

One great weakness of all forms of the Satisfaction theory of the necessity for Christ's death is that it is quite impossible to see how that death can accomplish its object. It <u>cannot</u> satisfy God. I have seen no real attempt to answer this difficulty. We are told that "some great act is necessary whereby the wrong done to the moral order shall be put right" - that

'the sanctity of the law must be satisfied" - that "the neces-
ary reaction of a holy God against sin must be expressed". Now the question
s, does the death of Christ - can the death of Christ by any
stretch of imagination be conceived to do any one of these things?
Of course this question has been put forward over and over again,
and yet the Satisfaction theory continues to be held. The fact
is, the sanctity of the law would not be upheld, it would be
further outraged, by the death of Christ. It is impossible to
think of any righteous law or good principle whatever being
satisfied or vindicated by the death of Christ. That death would
itself be the greatest of all sins and an unthinkable horror
unless it can be seen to be the last desparate and only possible
means of attaining an end that must be attained even at the ut-
most cost - the destruction of evil and the deliverance of man.
It is the simple fact that sin is <u>not</u> punished - the law is <u>not</u>
satisfied - God's honour is <u>not</u> vindicated - nor the moral
government of the universe upheld - nor the judgement of God
on sin expressed - by the death of the good Christ. <u>But the evil
is overcome!</u> I really wish to protest that, in spite of the
"passionate scholarship" and fine writing of Dr.Denney and many
others, it is nothing short of blasphemy to attribute the death
of Christ to any divine necessity or any other cause or object
whatever except the one supreme object of destroying evil -
which it alone could do. Among all theories of the Atonement,
the Ransom theory makes this plain. The theory of a Ransom to
the devil, as it was elaborated by the Patristic writers - even
in the really fine pages of Gregory of Nyssa - can only be put
by with a smile in our day. We have left mythology - and per-
haps even the personality of the devil behind us. But the

principle remains. And it supplies a key and a light sorely needed in modern discussions of Atonement doctrine.

The "obscurity that clouds the thought" of Dr.Denney as to the necessity for Christ's death is well illustrated in what he says about sacrifice. Denney has some fine things to say about sacrifice, but it seems to me that he betrays considerable uneasiness in his efforts to explain how Christ's death is a sacrifice or propitiation offered to God. The truth is it is no such thing. The whole sacrifice that is offered in the death of Christ - as F.D.Maurice has so clearly shown - is on God's part. Christ's death is entirely God's sacrifice - God's supreme sacrifice of Himself offered to man - to the evil that grips man - in order to deliver him from it.

Denney says:-

> "The value (of Christ's sacrifice) is that somehow or other it neutralises sin as a power estranging man and God, and that in virtue of it God and man are reconciled. .....All sacrifice was offered to God, and, whatever its value, it had that value for Him. No man ever thought of offering sacrifi ce for the sake of a moral effect it was to produce on himself. If we say that the death of Christ was an atoning sacrifice, then the atonement must be an objective atonement. It is to God it is offered, and it is to God it makes a difference.....The most radical objection, of course, is that Christ is God's gift to man, and therefore cannot be a sacrifice by or for men to God; but in point of fact this objection never had weight. The sense that Christ is the Father's gift to the world never deterred Christians from thinking of Him instinctively as a sacrifice to God for the putting away of sin. (Doct.of Recon.30-31)

The whole bearing of what he says on this matter both here and in other places is on the thought of the sacrifice being claimed by and offered to God. There is a want of recognition of the bearing of the sacrifice in the other direction - the sacrifice proceeding from God for the deliverance of man.

It will be noticed that Denney assumes that if the Atonement be objective, the object of it must be God Himself. The Atonement in the Ransom theory is a truly objective Atonement, but the object is - the evil in man, not God at all. The whole transaction is aimed at removing evil.

Compare Denney's view, however, with the clear and bold teaching of Maurice on Sacrifice:-

> "In these Sermons I have compared these two sacrifices; the sacrifice which manifests the mind of God,- which proceeds from God, which accomplishes the purpose of God in the redemption and reconciliation of His creatures, which enables those creatures to become like their Father in Heaven by offering up themselves;- and the sacrifices which men have dreamed of in one country or another, as a means of changing the purposes of God, of converting Him to their mind, of procuring deliverance from the punishment of evil, while the evil still exists." (Doct.of Sacrifice.Introd.xliv-v)
>
> "The propitiation - for I did not object to the word when we had found the divine signification of it - was set forth by God; it was declared to be.....His own declaration of His own will and purpose to men; His own way of reducing their will and purpose into submission to His. The Cross gathered up into a single transcendent act the very meaning of all that had been and all that was to be. God was there seen in the might and power of His love, in direct conflict with Sin and Death and Hell, triumphing over them by sacrifice".(pp.255-6)

The difference is unmistakable. Denney is striving to show how there are divine necessities which demand to be propitiated in the sacrifice of Christ, and that this is the reason for such a sacrifice at all; in Maurice there is a totally different emphasis: the demand for the sacrifice is on the other side - in man, his plight, his sin. And here perhaps appears Maurice's chief contribution to a true objective theory of the Atonement,

in his emphatic teaching that all sacrifice proceeds from God: Christ is entirely God's sacrifice, offered by Him, and in no sense a sacrifice offered to God.

The idea of Sacrifice and the idea of Ransom are one and the same, when it is understood that it is God Who makes the sacrifice. When Denney goes on to discuss the Ransom theory - how man is held in bondage by evil and Christ's death delivers him from it - one is not surprised to hear him say: "the truth of this, in the appeal it makes to our feeling and experience, is unquestionable, and it is as easy to apprehend as everything involved in the notion of sacrifice is difficult."(31) Denney's thought is too much entangled in the "divine necessities". The one great divine necessity was to destroy sin and to deliver man from its power and corruption, so that man might be reconciled to God. It was this alone that called forth the one supreme sacrifice.

If Maurice's great idea be true, that the sacrifice in Christ's death is wholly on God's part - it is God Who is sacrificing Himself - then we have at once the Ransom theory pure and simple. What is the purpose of the sacrifice? The deliverance of man, nothing else.

One cannot help feeling that this great vital fact of the Atonement, the central fact in our Christian faith, should be capable of some straightforward, unambiguous explanation that will satisfy the mind, and which can be given at once in answer to the questionings of inquirers - and it seems to me we have it here.

Before proceeding to defend the theory against its other great rival - the purely subjective theory of Abelard - there is one further consideration I should wish to bring forward.

S.T.Coleridge in his discussion of St.Paul's teaching on the Atonement very strikingly calls attention to a point of view which has largely been ignored in the treatment of the doctrine, but which has a profound bearing upon the matter we have been dealing with. That is, that a careful distinction must be drawn between the effects of God's redeeming act as these are felt in the experience of the redeemed - and that act itself in its actual significance for God. This has not always been taken into account. In thinking about the fact of the Atonement we are often confused between what God is actually doing and what the redeemed man feels is happening in his experience. Now by disentangling the effects or consequences of Christ's act as they are experienced by men from the essential nature of the act itself, Coleridge (as already pointed out in the section dealing with his work) manages most skilfully to refute the whole idea of satisfaction being made to God in the Atonement. "It is the effect and consequences of Christ's mediation that St.Paul is dilating on."(Aids.p.73)

This is certainly illuminating and may help to explain much. As both Denney and Mozley have made clear, it is impossible to remove from the texture of the Apostle's thought the idea that God needs to be reconciled to man, and that there is an enmity on God's part as well as on man's before the reconciliation takes place. It is true. Paul dwells on the "wrath" of God (Rom.I.18.&c.) It must be admitted that expiation, satisfaction,

substitution, penalty and kindred ideas do appear in the thought of the Apostle. They cannot be eliminated from it. Moreover they are true to experience, for these words describe exactly what the redeemed man feels. God's wrath has been turned away - my debt has been paid by Christ - He has stood in my place - my penalty has been borne by Him, He has been punished in my stead. That is all true. There cannot be many things ever said about the Atonement which are not true to some element of redeemed experience. But the question is - can we describe the act of Atonement itself and God's intention in that act in these or such like terms? The distinction is obvious, and I think Coleridge has rendered a useful service in pointing it out so emphatically. There must be some real necessity for Christ's death that God Himself feels, and it is this we desire to get at in theorising on the doctrine. As I have attempted to make clear , that necessity can only lie in the evil, in the need to overcome it and deliver man from it.

In the old Cathedral in the city of Ghent there is a very interesting monument. It is an ancient baptismal font in the form of a large globe cut out of stone and resting on a pedestal. Round the circumference or equator of the globe, entirely encircling it, there is carved a huge serpent whose head and tail meet at the point where the spectator stands. The scaly body of the serpent bulges out prominently from the surface of the stone, and the obvious intention of the sculptor - which his skill has been very successful in realising -- is to show how the entire globe is dominated by the serpent. Now above, on the very top of the globe, there stands a small cross. It

leans over somewhat to one side, as if battered and almost overthrown by some tempest or other force, but it still stands, barely holding its ground, on the top of the globe and above the serpent.

The meaning is clear and very true. The Cross is still on the top, the Cross wins, but it only wins and no more. It is all it can do to hold its ground, but it does hold on and on ever above. The serpent has terrific power, but at the last of it the Cross wins.

Now this power of evil, this huge dominating serpent, which somehow has power to drive and compel both God and man, and which seems almost to conquer, is what I maintain has not been allowed for sufficiently in the explanations given of the need for an atoning suffering and death in order to the forgiveness of sin and the redemption of mankind. I would attribute actual power to this evil, power against God as well as against man, and there I would find the necessity for Christ's sufferings.

In "The Christian Experience of Forgiveness", Dr.Mackintosh, dealing with the matter from the definite point of view of human experience, speaks of the Atonement made by Christ as the cost of forgiveness to God. His leading thought is the divine cost, the price God had to pay.

> "The Christian message of forgiveness declares that the Father puts us right with Himself, at an inward cost of which Calvary is the measure"(p.60)
> "In forgiving sin God takes account of moral realities. He would not be more divine if He dealt with sin as a trifle, merely letting the sinner off; He would cease to be God"(158).
> "At Gethsemane and Calvary.....faith discerns such an exhibition of divine reconciling passion, such a tragic tension in which God spares Himself nothing, as makes the heart faint within us and stops every mouth before God." (190)

> And Dr.Mackintosh speaks of sin as - "that awful power with which God Himself grapples in strife and pain".

That is exactly my point. Have the theologians fully evaluated what this implies?

But now, while God must take account of moral realities, why should He have to suffer? Why should there be a cost to God, a price God has to pay? This thought requires to be followed out into all that it involces. Forgiveness of a brother means much cost to us, but why should it do so in the case of God? We are confessedly involved in a struggle with sin and selfishness, they have power over us - but is it so with God? If it is, we must think what it means.

Maurice in his "Religions of the World", speaking of the religion of the Goths, shadows forth the true explanation of the "cost" to God in the Atonement:-

> "Every Northern Saga is full of profoundest interest and instruction. A mighty power of death and of darkness struggling to draw all creatures into itself; mightier powers of good struggling against it; consuming fires that are to destroy what is corrupt; life coming out of death, second birth, resurrection - these are the ideas by which they were haunted and possessed."(Relig.of the World.I22)

The Christian Atonement means for God this great battle. It is a titanic conflict, the evil is real, and the weapon with which God fights it is - suffering. Christ's death is God's dreadful battle with evil: it does not merely "show God's attitude to sin" - it is God's actual life and death struggle against sin!

CHAPTER VII

CRITICISM OF THE SUBJECTIVE THEORY OF "MORAL INFLUENCE"

I. ABELARD'S VIEW.

If the essential principle of the Ransom theory is to be maintained as the truest explanation - the nearest rationale - of the act of Atonement, it will have to be made good against a much more serious rival than any form of the Satisfaction theory can present: namely, the purely subjective or "Moral Influence" theory.

This has been advanced from time to time by outstanding thinkers as a relief to the intolerable burden of the prevailing doctrine, but it has never succeeded in capturing the centre of the feild, which has all along been held by the Anselmic tradition.

I am not concerned with Abelard's teaching; I mention his name in connection with the theory of Moral Influence because he was the first to put definitely forward this simple and attractive thought in explanation of the Atonement,- that it was the pure act of the Divine love, a supreme sacrifice on God's part with the single purpose of appealing to men and winning them from sin. That is an intelligible position and perfectly clear, but it has never won general acceptance because instinctively the Christian consciousness seemed to detect a weakness in it. The explanation it offers has never appeared to be quite adequate to the case. It is inadequate to the Scripture presentation of the fact of the Atonement, and to that fact as it appears in the experience of the redeemed.

It should be noted here that this "Moral Influence" theory

of the Atonement explains the death of Christ solely as a revelation -- an exhibition or manifestation of God's love, a method freely chosen by God of so showing His love to man as to persuade man's will. That and nothing more. The theory as a distinct theory by itself, must be pinned down to this single thought. Certain writers, like Rashdall, for example, - the great modern exponent of Abelard's idea - would somewhat demur to this, but it must be insisted upon. If there is more in Christ's death than a mere exhibition or revelation -- if there is some profound necessity which makes this the only possible method of accomplishing the object of man's redemption - if for any reason God is forced to adopt this method - then some other theory becomes involved, and the purely subjective, Moral Influence explanation falls to the ground. (I would say that if this particular method of redemption - sending Christ to the Cross - is necessitated, and no other would avail, then you have at once the Ransom theory in principle. God had to pay this price. It appears to me that Rashdall's Abelardian view hardly seems to appreciate this.)

It is in his Commentary on the Romans that Abelard develops his theory. Christ died, neither because a ransom had to be paid to the Devil, nor because the blood of an innocent victim was required to appease the wrath of an angry God, but that a supreme exhibition of love might kindle a corresponding love in the hearts of men and win them to the true freedom of the sons of God. There are undoubtedly other points of view to be found in Abelard, as has been clearly shown by Dorner(iv.19), Denney(Reconcil.80-81), Mozley(132.Note), and others; but his

real interest, so far as the explanation of Christ's death is concerned, is here. The great object is to persuade, to win, by the revelation of love, and the most valuable service Abelard has rendered is in his emphatic insistence on the fact of love as the supreme motive of God in the Atonement.

2. RASHDALL.

Rashdall is the leading modern English theologian who has adopted this purely subjective view as his own, and in "The Idea of Atonement in Modern Theology" this whole position is elaborately argued out. Rashdall says that in Abelard both the Ransom theory and every kind of substitutionary or expiatory Atonement is explicitly denied, and the efficiency of Christ's death is quite simply and definitely explained by its subjective influence on the mind if the sinner. In "Ideas and Ideals" Rashdall says: "Abelard provided the medieval world with a theory to which no objection can be taken on moral grounds.....the view which simply treats the death of Christ as a peculiarly characteristic and conspicuous exhibition of that self-sacrificing love which was the inspiring motive of all Christ's work for man and which makes it the great revelation of God, moving the world to answering love and gratitude..... The Abelardian teaching is wholly in accordance with Christ's teaching inasmuch as it represents Christ's life and death, the revelation of God, as the strongest influence which there is in the world for bringing about that repentance and amendment upon which, as He Himself taught, acceptance with God really depends"(I59.I62).

In defending his subjective theory Rashdall - naturally - has considerable difficulty with some of the words of Jesus,

and gives his own account of Jesus' teaching. I have already referred to his treatment of the "Ransom" passage, but he has the same difficulty with the sayings of Jesus found in the narratives of the Lord's Supper (Mat.26.26-29) (Mk.I4,22-25)(Lk.22-I5-22) The accounts we have of our Lord's words on that occasion are "not consistent with each other." They cannot be taken literally for "in points of detail the contradict one another." "Only one of the versions contains any reference to the forgiveness of sins, and the words which contain this reference are precisely the words which may most confidently be set aside"(Idea of THEOL% p.38). In regard to the expressions,"my blood", "covenant",etc., in the narratives, Rashdall is constantly found saying,"if the words be genuine", "if He actually used the words," etc., which shows the tendency of his mind on the matter, and his dislike of admitting any objective element whatever in the Atonement as Jesus spoke of it. He is very eager to grasp at the possible non-genuineness of any words or ideas which will not fit into his theory.

I confess to having very little patience with this kind of thing. When we have four accounts - three in the Synoptics and one in the Apostle - all very much alike and presenting one plain thought to the ordinary mind, surely that thought can hardly be dismissed in this off-hand manner; and to understand the words, "Take, eat; this my body," as meaning no more than this: "As I give you this bread, so I devote myself wholly to you (to you rather than for you).I desire to identify myself with you in the closest possible manner: take this as a farewell Expression of our spiritual union" - is surely a remarkable tour de force!. (Idea of Theol.p.42).

In regard to the general teaching of Jesus on forgiveness, Rashdall insists that with Jesus the sole condition of forgiveness is the state of the heart, moral righteousness, love to God and one's neighbour. It is entirely a "judgement according to works"(p.23). Side by side with this there is teaching equally explicit and equally simple about the possibility and need for repentance, and the certainty of forgiveness upon repentance. These are the sole conditions according to Jesus. The need for repentance is the very essence of the appeal that Jesus made from the very outset.of His ministry.(23) "Forgiveness is a necessary corollary of His fundamental doctrine of God's love to His children"(25). The parables of the Prodigal Son and the Pharisee and Publican mean that God forgives the truly repentant without any other condition than that of true repentance.

All this is clear and simple and it is perfectly true so far as it goes. Where it fails is in that it does not go deeply enough into the repentant state and what brings it about. Repentance is necessary of course because forgiveness cannot take place in men's hearts without repentance. That is true doctrine. Men cannot be forgiven without repentance. But I go further and say that men cannot repent without deliverance. That is where Atonement by the death of Christ appears. Rashdall's idea of what Christ taught and meant leaves no place for the Cross and offers no explanation of it. The Cross is irrelevant. Yet the Cross is the standing fact that requires explanation. Jesus taught all that simple and precious truth which Rashdall has expounded - but why did He die?

As regards the teaching of the Apostle, Rashdall admits that

St.Paul certainly does attribute to the death of Christ an actual objective efficacy, though by far the greater part of what He says may be explained and justified by the subjective effect which the love of God revealed by Christ produces on the soul of the believer. This side of the matter - the appeal made by the amazing love of God in the death of Christ to human love and gratitude - is the side of the atonement doctrine increasingly insisted on in the later epistles.

In discussing this matter Rashdall shows appreciation of the point so well brought out by Coleridge - the importance of distinguishing between the essential nature of the atoning act and the effects of that act in man's experience; and I agree entirely with what he here says about the teaching of the Apostle. But I would add that Christ's death was not a method chosen by God merely to show His love and so win men to repentance, but rather a method imposed upon God by the nature of the evil of which men had to repent. Such a dreadful and desparate expedient as appears in the Cross must have had <u>some deeper meaning, some more dire necessity</u>, than merely the desire to show, to reveal, to exhibit. That is what I contend for; and if it be so then you have an objective element, and you pass beyond the Moral Influence theory.

There is a fine passage in Rashdall's book which I would like to quote, as it shows clearly that in his own thought on the matter he cannot entirely rest in the purely subjective view:

> "The only way in which the existence of so much evil of all kinds.....can be reconciled with the goodness of God is (as it seems to me) to suppose that the evil is in some way a means to the utmost attainable good.....But if our moral consciousness reveals to us any objective truth, evil remains evil still, and if evil it must be

> evil for God as well as for man. And therefore if God loves mankind He must needs sorrow over human sin and human pain. We may reverently say that if God is good, if He is loving, if He looks on men as His children, in a word, if He is like Christ - He must in some sense suffer in or with His creatures.....A God Who contemplates such a world as ours without suffering would not be a loving God, neither would He be in the least like Christ.....No kind of death could have revealed the love of God so impressively as a death of suffering voluntarily submitted to for love of the brethren. The Atonement is the central truth of Christianity in so far as it proclaims and brings home to the heart of man, the supreme Christian truth that God is love, and that love is the most precious thing in human life." (Idea of Atone.pp.452-454)

Now I cannot fathom how one can speak in this way and yet not see that there is some deeper meaning and necessity in Christ's death than merely to reveal God's love. The whole bearing of this passage is to bring out the terrible and tragic power of evil, a power to cause suffering both to God and man. (a) It certainly shows that evil is something other than "a means to the utmost attainable good". (b) It shows also that evil caused the death of Christ - called it forth. God was compelled to do this if man was to be saved. (c) It shows that, if that death of Christ saves man from evil, it does so by something else, something more, than merely appealing to his heart. It does reveal God's love and thus appeal to man's heart, to his gratitude, his love, - all theories admit this - but that revelation is not the whole meaning of the death. That is to say, the case is not that God chose this method of supremely revealing His love and so winning man over: the case is that God had to adopt this method as the only one that would deal with evil and deliver man from it. What I contend for is that in Christ's death there is some objective effect wrought other than simple revelation for the purpose of persuasion.

3. VIEWS OF COLERIDGE AND MAURICE ESSENTIALLY DISTINCT FROM THE SUBJECTIVE THEORY.

Abelard's idea is in an eminent degree simple, reasonable and intelligible, and therein has considerable advantage over some other views; but it is inadequate to the facts, an d the teaching of both our two theologians, Coleridge and Maurice, is to be essentially distinguished from it. It is impossible to place that teaching under any purely subjective explanation of the Atonement.

It may be said at once that the leading point of difference is to be found in their doctrine of the Will. With Coleridge and Maurice the will is not free to repent. It is not able to repent. The will is "diseased" and requires a "cure", it is "captive" and requires "deliverance". The subjective theory assumes - it must assume - that persuasion alone, powerful persuasion, is all that is necessary. If persuasion is powerful enough the will will yield. Therefore the account which this theory gives of the necessity for Christ's death is that it is the last, uttermost form of appeal that God could bring to bear, that is, the perfect revelation of His love and will to forgive. The Ransom theory goes deeper, and the teaching of both Coleridge and Maurice agrees with it. More than appeal or persuasion is involved. Some actual work is wrought on the will, something is done with the corrupt, diseased, captive state of the will -- a remedy, a deliverance is provided whereby the will is enabled to repent and yield. You do not only appeal to a diseased person - you cure him; or to a captive -- you loose his chain.

In God's great act of love in the Cross of Christ there is surely appeal and persuasion of the highest kind, there is a call and a summons and all we can think of hope and promise and inspiration; but underneath all that there is first of all deliverance, redemption. This is so familiar and so entirely scriptural as to seem obvious, yet it is necessary to point it out for there is a truth here which the purely subjective theory misses, and which both Coleridge and Maurice dwell upon throughout their whole teaching on the matter.

Coleridge's very characteristic doctrine of "Original Sin" removes him essentially from the subjective standpoint in his theory of redemption. As we have seen, original sin is for him simply sin that originates in a will. All sin is original sin. But as regards redemption, the point here is that while sin thus originates in the will's own act, by that act the will becomes corrupt and helpless. "For this is the essential attribute of a will and contained in the very idea, that whatever determines the will acquires this power from a previous determination of the will itself.....And if by an act to which it had determined itself it has ~~subjugated~~ subjected itself to the determination of nature (in the language of St.Paul, to the "will of the flesh") it receives a nature into itself and so far becomes a nature: and this is a corruption of the will and a corrupt nature. It is also a fall of man, inasmuch as his will is the condition of his personality." (Aids.p.230) He constantly speaks of this subject state of the will as a "disease", and of Christianity as the "remedy". "Ask me not how such a

disease can be conceived possible. I come to cure the disease, not to explain it"(234). "That it is in the power of the will either to repent or to have faith (in the Gospel sense of the word) is itself a consequence of the redemption of mankind, a free gift of the Redeemer"(261).

This is far removed from the simple principle of subjective moral influence. The central idea of Coleridge that the atoning act in its relation to the human will is "transcendent", mysterious - "factum est" - and that its nearest analogy may be a "new birth", a regeneration through a quickening Spirit; or some kind of "inward co-agency" ("an Agent who can at once act on the will as an exciting cause quasi ab extra, and in the will as the condition of its potential, and the ground of its actual being" 276) - this is fundamentally distinct from the principle of the subjective theory.

Maurice's idea of the corruption and bondage of the will and its need for deliverance is entirely in line with Coleridge, but his treatment of the matter is of course much fuller and goes much farther than with Coleridge.

Maurice's chief contribution to Atonement doctrine is found in his idea of Sacrifice: "That doctrine I hold, as our forefathers held it, to be the doctrine of the Bible, the doctrine of the Gospel;" and according to Maurice the true meaning of sacrifice is: "The sacrifice which manifests the mind of God, which proceeds from God, which accomplishes the purposes of God in the redemption and reconciliation of His creatures, which enables these creatures to become like their Father in Heaven by offering up themselves."(Doct.of Sacrifice.Introd.)

This is the essential teaching of Maurice on the Atonement, reiterated throughout his works, and we have here the leading point I have referred to as distinguishing him from the purely subjective principle - that is the thought that it is God's sacrifice alone which enables us to offer ourselves as a sacrifice to Him, that sets us free, delivers the will, and gives us power to repent. This thought, which he repeats over and over again, is characteristic of Maurice's whole teaching. The sacrifice of God in Christ is "that mighty conquering power - that power against which no other in earth or Heaven could measure itself" (id.p.219). This sacrifice is offered "that they might be able to offer themselves as children to do their Father's work and will"(66). "It is the Word Who has purchased for them the privilege and the power of sacrificing themselves"(309). Maurice is as clear as Coleridge in showing sin to be the "disease" of the will, and he speaks of the Atonement as "an actual remedy for an actual disease"(175,etc.)

What I am concerned to bring out is the essential distinction of Maurice's teaching from the subjective position, and therefore I wish to emphasise in his case - as in that of Coleridge - only this one leading point of the will and its deliverance. In Maurice as in Coleridge the whole bearing of the act of Atonement is on the redemption, the deliverance of the diseased and captive will of man. I only stress this point meantime. My view is that it removes him entirely from the subjective standpoint. Maurice speaks of a sin "so intricately and inseparably interwoven with the very fibres of

their being, that men cannot get rid of it without destroying themselves"(Essays.25).

I am anxious to avoid the appearance of placing Maurice (where he would no doubt be somewhat startled to find himself!) definitely within the ancient Patristic theory of a Ransom to Satan; but the truth is that passage after passage throughout his voluminous works could easily be cited which offer in all essentials a modern rendering of that theory, showing unmistakably that Maurice personally held and earnestly professed the full New Testament conception of an Evil Spirit with its power of bondage over the human will, on which the Ransom theory is largely founded.

> See for example: Theol.Essays, "On Sin","On the Evil Spirit".
> Doct.of Sacrifice, Ser.VIII."Christ's Sacrifice a Redemption". Ser.XII."Christ made Sin for us". Ser.XV."Christ's Death a Victory over the Devil".etc.

He says: "I have further contended with great - some of the orthodox journals seem to think with excessive - vehemence, that the denial of an Evil Spirit, of a Devil, confuses the facts of the universe, our own inmost experience, and the divine witness concerning God's victory over evil". (Doct.of Sacrifice.Introd.xxx.)

I have no wish to make out a case from any special sayings or passages, however numerous, in a writer like Maurice. I maintain his fundamental distinction from the subjective theory on the ground of his whole teaching as to Christ's act being in its nature essentially redemptive, an act of deliverance; but before passing from this matter, I may refer to

one very striking instance he gives of Christ's death actually breaking the power of the Devil. Dealing with the verse, "that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil", Maurice shows how the devil's most complete victory over men is in his power to persuade them that death separates from God, it is the final separation, the final chasm, of which all other separations are but dim prophecies. Now Christ by His death and resurrection tears in pieces that calumny against God. No words could have done it. The transcendent act does it. Christ dies and rises again and thus breaks the bondage of that deception. His death, which seemed to separate Him from God, is made the pledge of His eternal union with Him, and actually breaks the devil's power by scattering the delusion he has cast over men's minds. (Doct.of Sacrifice.236-7)

4. GENERAL DEFECTS OF THE THEORY.

I am not content, then, with the Subjective theory in any form in which, so far as I know, it has appeared. The act of Atonement cannot be understood on the plane of "Subjective Moral Influence"; and that is true whether regard be had to the Divine initiation of the act on the one hand, or, on the other, to the effects of the act on man. It is not simply a moral influence persuading man to abandon evil, but is rather an actual objective dealing with the evil in man. There is a difference between these two things both to God and to man. (i) To God it means that He did not simply choose this method of appealing to man, but was, so to speak, shut up to it, enforced into it, as the only possible method of accomp-

lishing His purpose. And (ii) to man, it means that he is not simply appealed to or persuaded - he is delivered, a totally different matter.

Now, if the "Moral Influence" theory were to be so extended as to include these ideas - namely, that there is a power of evil which compels God to act in this way if man is to be redeemed, and that man on his part finds that he is not merely appealed to and powerfully persuaded to repent, but that he is set free, delivered, enabled to repent, that something happens to the evil within him in consequence of Christ's atoning act - then I am entirely prepared to accept that theory. But in that case I maintain - first, the theory cannot properly be described as one of subjective moral influence; and second, it is certainly not the "Moral Influence" theory as it has historically appeared. It is not the theory of Abelard nor of Rashdall. Moral suasion of man's will by the supreme revelation of God's love is the essence of the transaction as this theory has actually appeared in the history of the doctrine. When you go beyond that you undoubtedly introduce the essential principle of the Ransom theory.

The subjective theory does not go deep enough. It does not take sufficient account of the reality and power of evil, and therefore it can never offer an adequate reason why this dire and terrible expedient of the Cross was necessary. If the theory of moral influence - revelation for the purpose of persuasion - is the true explanation of the Atonement, then the Cross, in the last resort, was not necessary. It was an

accident. It was an arbitrary choice on God's part to reveal Himself in this way. You cannot avoid the thought that God might have chosen some other method. Lacking some dire and absolute necessity, it would be true to say that the Cross would rather repel than attract what is best in man. It is simply because it is necessary, and because God does not shrink from this terrible necessity, that the Cross has its unique power to appeal to men and to win them. If the only necessity lay in the effort to appeal, the appeal would fail. It is because the Cross is absolutely unavoidable on other grounds that it has its appeal. And these grounds appear in the evil that God is attacking by means of the Cross. The Cross is the "power of God" and the "wisdom of God" in dealing with evil.

That, I think, is the answer to Abelard. The moral theory is quite inadequate to the facts of the case. It can offer no real explanation of these facts without tacitly assuming the principles of a deeper theory.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUDING SUMMARY.

My endeavour in the Thesis has been to show that the Patristic, Pre-Anselmic view of the Atonement - the idea of a Ransom to the Devil - is the true one. The myth need not trouble us: the truth is there. Great truths have been given under mythical forms ere now, and the great truth given in the Ransom theory is that the Christian Atonement means - God in Christ grappling with evil, and overcoming evil, for man's redemption. That thought best explains the facts, and this is the only theory that makes the thought unambiguously clear.

The fact to be explained is the Cross of Christ: why was it necessary? how did it effect its object? - and (as we have seen) neither the Anselmic tradition of Satisfaction to God, nor the Abelardian tradition of Appeal to man, can really supply a satisfactory answer. The Ransom theory gives the simple explanation, that this was the only possible method of accomplishing the object, of overcoming evil, it was the price God had to pay for man's deliverance. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." I believe thia is fundamentally the New Testament interpretation of the facts; I am certain it is the mind of both Coleridge and Maurice on the matter; and I find this view given - purely and unequivocably - in the Ransom theory alone among all Atonement theories. The difficulty lies in man, not in God, and the whole bearing

of the atoning act is manward, not Godward;- manward not merely in the way of appeal or moral influence, but in tne way of redemption, deliverance, emancipation.

I. A RECENT UPHOLDER OF THE PATRISTIC THEORY.

There are various indications that thought on the Atonement will move more and more in this direction. For example, in a masterly little treatise on the Subjective view, "The Problem of the Cross", by W.E.Wilson - which he calls a "variety" or "extension" of the Moral Influence theory - the writer gives it as his profound conviction - after a careful study of the New Testament - that no New Testament writer taught a "penal substitution" or "satisfaction" view of the Atonement. "While the older theories", he says, "saw the cause of Christ's death in a Divine requirement of justice, and its effect primarily on God and only secondarily on man, this (Wilson's view) sees as its direct and only cause the sin of man, and as its effect the removal of that sin by inducing men to repent."(p.4I) This is a distinct advance on the Satisfaction theory, but he does not get beyond the Subjective theory. Wilson is right in saying that the sin of man is the only cause, but wrong in limiting the effect of Christ's death to the "inducing" of men to repent. It enables men to repent. His view is not really adequate to the New Testament idea of the meaning of the Cross. He says again: "A false idea in the old theories is that God is not at liberty to forgive freely - an idea which is a mere invention of the theologians, and is not found either in the Old or New Testament"(2I) I think the real defect of his position is seen here. The "old theologians" -

the "old theories" - at least the oldest theory, the Patristic, did not hold that God is not at liberty to forgive freely, but that God has not power to do so, or rather that His free forgiveness cannot take effect because man, undelivered, has not power to accept it.

This is a fine and stimulating study of the Atonement, and very significant. While he does not actually reach the true theory, he comes within sight of it and feels after it. The interpretation of the death of Christ must be entirely "manward", but for this writer that only means, apparently, that it "turns", "wins", "persuades" men - never that it frees them.

Much more notable is a recent volume of Lectures on the history of the Atonement by Professor Aulén of Lund (English Trans.by A.G.Hebert,M.A.1931). The Lectures were delivered before the University of Upsala and in Germany, and were published in 1930 under the title, "Die drei Haupttypen der christlichen Versöhnungsgedenkens." The English version is entitled, "Christus Victor". I read the book with great interest as it turns out to be a direct defence of the Patristic idea, which the writer calls the "Classic" theory of the Atonement. The essential idea of this Classic view is that the Atonement is a victory of God Himself in Christ over hostile powers. Aulén endeavours to show that this has really been the main line of Atonement theory in the Church all along, his chief contribution, perhaps, being his emphatic claim that Luther himself belongs to this Classic type. I take a few sentences to show his line of thought:-

"The main idea is clear. The work of Christ is first

and foremost a victory over the powers which hold mankind in bondage: sin, death and the devil"(p.36).
"With Irenaeus (he dates the Classic theory from Irenaeus) it is God Himself Who in Christ accomplishes the work of redemption, and overcomes sin, death, and the devil"(37).
"The Classic view of the Atonement has a dualistic background, namely, the reality of the forces of evil, which are hostile to the Divine will....The work of Atonement is depicted in dramatic form as a conflict with the powers of evil and a triumph over them"(5I).
Referring to the Ransom theory - "We must penetrate to that which lies below the mythological dress, and look for the religious ideas which lie concealed beneath" (64)
"Behind the 'deception of the devil' lies the true idea that the evil power really overreaches itself when it comes in conflict with the good"(7I).

This is the first modern writer I have come across who takes the Patristic idea of a Ransom to the devil seriously and gives a reasoned exposition of the religious ideas underlying it.

Aulen denies, like W.E.Wilson, that the Satisfaction theory is to be found in the New Testament. I hold this too, and I think it is true if one keeps in mind the essential distinction (which Coleridge draws attention to) between the Act of Atonement itself, and its effects as experienced by the ~~red~~ redeemed. Penal, juridical, forensic conceptions are certainly all found in St.Paul, because such ideas are true to redeemed experience.

I think Aulen underrates the epoch-making change brought about by Anselm. He says that this Classic type of theory has really been the prevailing type throughout, but this can hardly be maintained. There can be no doubt that the Anselmic or "Latin" view became the dominant one in the Scholastic and Reformation periods and right up to the present time.

And perhaps we may regard him as carried away by a hardly blameworthy enthusiasm over the discovery of a valuable buried treasure when we see him claim Luther as an adherent of the Ransom theory."There should be no doubt at all that in Luther we meet again the Classic idea of the Atonement. It is the Patristic view that has returned!"(I24).

This may not be quite convincing, but the whole argument is of extraordinary interest. Aulen would make out a case for Luther belonging to the Patristic view. With, I believe, more reason but on similar grounds, I have attempted to make out the same case for Coleridge and Maurice:- (a) They have not been recognised as such - naturally, as the entire theory had dropped out of sight. (b) Many expressions found in their writings seem to claim them for the Satisfaction or the Subjective theory. (c) The whole bearing of their teaching is essentially in line with the Patristic principle.

2. NATURE OF EVIL.

(i) DIVINE CAUSALITY IN RELATION TO EVIL.

The ultimate origin of evil is admittedly one of the unsolved problems, but the Ransom theory obviously rests upon the supposition of the actual reality and power of evil; and if this is to be upheld, if the idea is to be upheld that evil is a real thing, with power against God, power to call forth the death of Christ as the price of man's redemption, it must be probed at least to what depths may be possible, and the mind satisfied that it is resting on a solid bottom where no successful effort to explain evil away has been ignored.

Now, such an effort -- namely, to explain evil away - appears in the theory of an ultimate divine causality behind the evil, an idea which has an ancient origin, and has been adopted in modern times, for example, by Schleiermacher. If the divine causality is true, then God's struggle is after all only a sham fight.

In the interests of the Divine Omnipotence and to safeguard against the errors of Manichaeism, Schleiermacher definitely brings sin itself within God's causality. (See,e.g.,Arts.80-I "Der Christ.Glaube", Engl,Trans.) And I may say at once that it seems to me Schleiermacher here essentially departs from his chosen ground of Christian Experience. The weakness of his whole system - resting as it does on the Christian consciousness of "absolute dependence on God" - is (as Pfleiderer has pointed out) that it really makes our relation to God physical rather than moral. Indeed, in Schleiermacher the purely ethical - the moral relationship of persons and wills - tends to drop out of sight, and we have what practically amounts to a mechanical system, a monism of a Hegelian or even Spinozistic character.

> "As in our self-consciousness sin and grace are opposed to each other, God cannot be thought of as the Author of sin in the same sense as that in which He is the Author of redemption. But as we never have a consciousness of grace without a consciousness of sin, we must also assert that the existence of sin alongside of grace is ordained for us by God"(op.cit.p.326)
>
> "If we add the fact that the sin which persists outside redemption never ceases to generate more sin, and that redemption only begins to operate after sin has attained a certain degree, we need have no misgiving in saying that God is also the Author of sin - of sin, however, only as related to redemption"(328).
>
> "Manichaeism is a surrender of the theoretical religious interest in the reality of the Divine omnipotence in favour of the practical interest attaching to the

> idea that evil is real in the most unqualified sense, so as all the more to bring out the necessity that the perfect good should counteract it redemptively"(330). "Sin is ordained of God as that which makes redemption necessary. Unless indeed we are positively to assume that Divine action can be limited by that which does not depend on the Divine causality"(335).

Why not? Schleiermacher seems unable to understand ethics as entering into the relations between God and man. His "Divine Omnipotence" eliminates, apparently, the ethical altogether, and signifies a mechanical monism.

He seems, again, to mix up sin with finite existence as a whole. If God is the Author of the one He must be so of the other. But there is surely confusion here. The relation of the whole finite world to God is a profound enough philosophical problem with difficulties of its own, but it is quite distinct from the problem of the relation of sin or evil to God. Finite existence is not evil (unless perhaps by a return to the crudest Greek notions of matter). The Christian consciousness certainly posits finite being, and it also posits sin, but it absolutely refuses to attribute sin in any degree to the Divine causation, while it does not do so with regard to finite being as a whole. To attribute sin or evil to God's will (in any sense whatever) is entirely contrary to the dictates of that which is Schleiermacher's own chosen criterion - the Christian consciousness.

Nor can the Divine causality be allowed to slip in under shelter of the fact that that God has created free will and is therefore the original Author of the evil introduced by that will. "If this whole form of existence - the life of the natural man - subsists in virtue of Divine appointment, sin,

as proceeding from human freedom, has also a place in that appointment"(334).

If God creates free will He creates sin. This is really a contradiction. How God creates free will, or how it is related to God, is a problem by itself - but if its sin is not its own, wholly and originally, then the will is not free. That cannot be escaped. To attribute the evil of free will to God (in any sense that can be conceived) is to deny that freedom.

It were easy here to lose oneself in -

> "solitary thinkings such as dodge
> conception to the very bourne of heaven
> then leave the naked brain" -

but to keep on sane solid ground, there is nothing more emphatically pronounced by the Christian consciousness than that my sin is absolutely and entirely my own. To assign its ultimate cause in any way to God is to break through the bounds of that ethical universe within which all discussion of Atonement doctrine must abide.

Schleiermacher's teaching as to the Divine causality might attempt to vindicate itself from the point of view of the transmutation of evil into a higher good, the idea that evil has a high purpose. The greatest good is evil transmuted, so that evil is ultimately good and in the last resort flows from God. This thought has often been put forward as an explanation of the origin of evil, but the result is that while monism is saved - ethics is abolished. It seems to me that the whole conception of evil being the means to the highest good is artificial, and is inadmissable because essentially unethical. The evil, with all the suffering it

gives rise to including the Cross, is simply a scheme God has devised in order to create greater good!

This whole thought of the Divine causality behind the evil arises, of course, out of a shrinking from dualism and the desire to preserve a monistic universe - or, theologically, the omnipotence, the all-in-all character of God. The philosophical mind demands a monism. It always has done and always will do so - the imaginary conception of an Absolute is the goal of all pure philosophical inquiry. There is no doubt it must be so. It may be an ignis fatuus, but the thought of it is the only philosophic resting place. The endless search is satisfying and restful only when it seems to discern an Absolute on ahead.

But while in a metaphysical universe there may thus be no rest for the mind short of an ultimate monism, either of Subject (Hegel), or even of Substance (Spinoza): yet in an ethical universe, such as the Christian scheme of things has to do with, monism is unreal and dualism is simply a fact. Evil is real, an extraneous thing antagonistic to God. God must deliver man from it. God's struggle with evil is an actual struggle in which God suffers. (See Appendix H.)

(ii) GOD'S ANTAGONIST.

Evil then is a hostile power, a power against which both God and man have to fight. In the New Testament Christ's victory is over demonic powers, "principalities and powers" of evil, "the prince of this world", etc. In the Patristic theology

these hostile powers are personalised and individualised into the single figure of "Satan" or "The Devil". Christ's atoning act on the Cross is the ransom or price paid by God to this evil One for man's redemption.

Now, the subtle way in which evil gains ascendency over the human will and gets that will into a position of thraldom certainly suggests thoughts which lead the mind on till it seems almost impossible to stop short of the full New Testament conception of a Spirit of Evil. It is not my purpose to argue the question of the existence or non-existence of a personal Devil - an age-long, unsolved problem. As I have before remarked, the question is not vital to the actual principle of the Ransom theory: but the whole situation of evil in relation to the human will, the way in which it approaches and acts on the will, does seem to point with extraordinary persuasiveness to the existence of such a being.

Maurice himself has beautifully analysed the kind of experience referred to:-

> "The terrible visions of the past and of the future which every man has been conscious of - which seem to many as if they made up the sum of their existence - whence do they come? At first we think from without. We lay them to any annoying circumstance, to any disagreeable fellow creature. The same discoveries, which we cannot be deceived in, bring them nearer home. They must have more to do with us than with anything about us. They seem to move from us and yet toward us. There springs up in us, we cannot tell from whence, a desire to be freed from this vile state of mind, this self-torment. But the moment the effort at reformation begins, there begins a suggestion of discouragement and despair. The evil that has been done is brought against us; the evil that is with us still is brought against us. Both are arguments why we cannot obtain freedom, why we should not crave for it. Is this accusation from ourselves? Is it from conscience? But conscience cannot be an enemy of reformation, cannot bid us continue in evil. It must be one who is perverting all the witnesses of conscience, who is using them to keep us from ever being what conscience says we ought to become. It must

be an accuser, a slanderer - not one clothed in flesh and blood - but a spirit"(Doct.of Sacrifice.233-4).

"This tempter speaks to me, to myself, to my will. Over that he has established his tyranny. There his chains must be broken"(Essays.45)

We certainly have to take account of something of this kind, some evil power, actually working in human experience, working on the human will. The great sinners and the great saints of the race, the great wrestlers with evil and victors over evil - Luther, Bunyan, and a host of others, all illustrate it for us, and common men know it.

In cold scientific thought what is to be made of it? What is this Absolute Evil, this Devil, that acts on and in the human will, antagonises God, and calls forth the death of Christ in order to man's deliverance from its dominion?

If we are to assign some absolute origin to evil, or attempt at least some genetic account of it, I should imagine that origin to be found simply in the thought of negation. This is perhaps the nearest category one can think of. God is positive, in being and action. He is all good, all love, all that is good, all that is love, and as we conceive of this positive good and love moving on in creative activity, then what is left, what is not God - the negative implied by the positive - can be imagined as appearing in human history as the evil. God is not simply and diffusively the all. He is positive being in action. What remains is the not-God. In the boundless spaces of imagination, I can conceive of that as answering to the conception of "the origin of evil".

Such a view may perhaps find confirmation in, for example, the scientific philosophy of A.N.Whitehead. In his books, "Science and the Modern World" and Religion in the Making", Whitehead offers a notable contribution to the question as to what God is. God is the "principle of concretion" in the universe - that order of things whereby the whole universe of being is concreted, gathered to a point, as it were, in every single particular, that principle whereby each is in all, and all in each. That order pervading the whole universe that makes it concrete, is God.

Now Whitehead has given us a most luminous idea as to what evil is. God is the principle of concretion, but there is in the universe a principle of discretion - and this is the evil, God's antagonist. Evil is the principle of discretion or anti-concretion. It is this that hinders or obstructs the participation of all in each. This is the very opposite of God, the antagonist of God. It is the destroyer of concreteness as God is the promoter and sustainer of concreteness. God and this evil are mutually exclusive. Evil is not included in God, but is a certain disorder that appears in the universe.

We are far here from the thought of the Divine causality! Whitehead does not say how this principle of discretion or disorder first of all appears in the universe, or why it is there at all - "the difficulty," as someone has said, "is not that Satan fell out of heaven, but that he ever came into it" - but evil is there, this discreting, disordering, destroying thing, and its real existence and power affords the true

ground for the understanding of God's great atoning act in the Cross of Christ. (Appendix I.)

3. NATURE OF CHRIST'S VICTORY.

One question remains - How does the death of Christ overcome evil? What is the nature of that blow that is struck at the head of the evil by the Cross of Christ? That the Cross does strike a blow at it - a victorious blow - is the universal testimony of the ages of Christian experience. But how? How does the death of Christ effect its purpose? If, as we have seen, God has an antagonist to fight and overcome in delivering man, and if the weapon He uses is the death of Christ, what is the real nature of that weapon and wherein lies its power?

Now this is the great leading question as to how the death of Christ deals with evil, and it yields a very beautiful answer. It involves the extremely interesting fact that God's method of conquering evil is precisely what we have come to understand as the Christian method, the "Christian principle" "turning the other cheek", non-resistance, becoming "more than conquerors" not by resisting evil but by yielding to the utmost that it can do. So that God Himself, in the great original act of Redemption, which is the essential, vital moment in the whole structure of the spiritual universe, is carrying out the simple command of Jesus, "I say unto you that ye resist not evil". "The Lamb as it had been slain" is seen at the very centre of the Eternal Throne.

Suffering to the utmost at the hands of evil for the sake of others, in the effort to help them and deliver them from it,

is not unknown among ourselves. Moberly, speaking of vicarious penitence, beautifully instances what is perhaps one of the profoundest cases of the kind in our literature, the case of Peggotty and Little Em'ly in Dickens' novel. "Peggotty's love for his daughter is not diminished by her fall. The mental attitude in which the old fisherman and his daughter ultimately join, is penitential, and we see on his part vicarious penitence". He enters into the evil that is afflicting her. He bears it. He suffers and repents with his daughter. He suffers the utmost her sin can do for her sake.

The Ransom theory pictures the atoning sufferings of Christ as the supreme exemplification of the Christian idea of non-resistance - the enemy to whom it is offered being the Devil, the hostile power of evil. Christ yields to this entirely and so conquers it.

Yielding to it- that is the Christian way of overcoming evil. The Cross means that God in Christ actually submits and lets evil do its utmost - and by this evil is conquered. This is the truth Jesus Himself exemplified in His action, and hands on in His teaching to us. But can we go further? Can we analyse, can we explain the actual effect which yielding to its power has upon the evil? What does suffering do to evil whereby it conquers it? What actually happens when the good voluntarily yields and suffers to the end at the hands of evil? What is that extraordinary, unique, irresistible power of Christian meekness, harder than adamant, more durable than brass, always winning in the end? Why should yielding to its

power, letting it trample over you, letting it crucify you, why should not that rather strengthen the evil, confirm it, and extend its dominion? What strange alchemy is there in submission that changes evil, weakens it, reduces it from a power to a weakness, and casts it out beaten, defeated?

(i) First of all it may be answered, there is some mysterious effect here of which we can only say - factum est. It is the great Christian secret. We know that it happens. The spirit of the Cross does conquer evil, is the only thing that will conquer and destroy it, but how that takes place, who can tell? "That in some mysterious way the bodily death of Christ prevailed over the powers of evil, Origen certainly held," says Rashdall. "Acts of self-sacrifice - and particularly the supreme sacrifice of a unique personality - diffused a spiritual influence which directly acted on the evil spirits," but - "how exactly Christ's death, or other self-sacrificing deaths were supposed to defeat the danger, is not explained"(Idea of Atone.262).

(ii) Or is this effect (the effect exercised upon evil by the good submitting to the utmost suffering it can inflict) is it ultimately of the nature of a persuading, a melting, a softening of the hard and stubborn will of evil by the spectacle of the suffering? - In that case, there is after all some soul of good in the evil. It is not Absolute Evil. The Devil has it in him to "tak a thocht and mend". He can be moved. And also in that case, the purely moral argument is at last the true one.

(iii) Or again, is this effect of the nature of an exhaustion of the evil, by making it run itself out in a supreme effort, in which - its purpose accomplished - or rather, perhaps, shown to be impossible of accomplishment - it dies?

These are interesting questions, important too in the continued progress of Christianity, and in our inspiration to make our own fight with evil - but this is a region certainly where a dogmatic temper is not only "undesirable" and "unscriptural" but impossible.

My own mind inclines towards this final idea of exhaustion, defeating the purpose of evil by allowing it to pursue its purpose to the end, only to find that it fails. The good can suffer but it cannot be changed in its nature. The Devil beats on a wall of flint and breaks himself. There is thus, I would say, even some truth in the ancient idea of God deceiving Satan, in Satan's having the worst of the bargain in the transaction between him and God. Ths soul of Christ proves after all impossible of capture. "Through Christ's Atonement the power of Satan - the Prince of this world - is broken and his impotence in contrast with the Holy One, on whom he exhausted himself, demonstrated"(Dorner.IV.120).

The soul of Christ, which is the central core of the good, defies capture. It even defies attack, because the opposing force of evil, when in its conquering advance it comes right up against that soul, falls away broken, its power shattered. But the point is that the suffering of death, the last utter sacrifice that any soul can make, has been necessary in order

to show this. The body must go, death must be undergone, and death in such a dreadful form that facing it implies total and complete self-abnegation - this is Christ's yielding to evil - so that the impregnable soul may be reached and revealed. There is an inner point of light - a citadel of life - a centre of force - that cannot be penetrated, the Devil never touches the soul of Christ - "the Prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me" - but this inner point, this "orbed drop" of light and love, must be reached and shown to be impenetrable; and the reaching of that impenetrable point, the laying of it bare, that is the Atoning Death, the debt of suffering and sacrifice, which the good has to pay to the evil in order to destroy it.

"A body hast thou prepared me" - yes, to show, by its utmost pain, by its perfect sacrifice, that I have a <u>soul</u>!

In any case, this Redemptive Act is repeated. It is enacted over again in men age after age by the indwelling Spirit of God in Christ, Christ crucified and risen. God giving up His Son to conquer evil by dying at its hands may be only a special momentary historical manifestation of a continuous act. God is always and everywhere doing this, God is always struggling, suffering, conquering - but the principle is the same.

The Devil is not slain once for all. He rises and acts again in each individual will. But, in the Cross of Christ, the decisive blow has been struck at his power, the way has been

shown how to conquer him in each case, the Christian Principle has been shown to be the fundamental thing in the spiritual universe, and - the decisive blow having been struck by Christ, Christ's work being a "finished work" - it is always possible, even in the humblest human life, to be more than a conqueror through Him that loved us.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A.
The Atonement a living issue.

It is unnecessary to offer any justification or apology for a discussion of the Atonement to day. The doctrine is coming more and more into its true position as the vital element in the Christian Religion and the chief fact in the moral and spiritual experience of men. The doctrine and fact of Atonement actually holds the field, both in scholarly thought and in popular feeling. How inevitably it forces itself into the central position may be well illustrated by an example from current literature. The following occurs in a paper on "Myth and Reality" by C.M.Chilcott, in Canon Streeter's "Adventure":

On one page we find this:-

> "'He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities ------ and by His stripes we are healed'. This view of Atonement is based on a primitive and very deep rooted sense of justice in human nature - the view which Aeschylus finds ('drasanti pathein' - 'the doer must suffer') - and contains a profound religious appeal which no more subtle theory can lightly supersede. Such a view, however, is not acceptable to many at the present day. It has long been felt that it presents a view of God as Judge and Avenger which is incompatible with our view of Him as Love. To the younger generation it is not only immoral but meaningless, because the younger generation does not believe in "sin". It believes in folly and futility, meanness and blindness: and equally that, if any redemption of these things is possible, it must be by our own pain. Perhaps a belief in sin is a prerogative of the old and wise and optimistic: at any rate no religious doctrine based on a belief expressed in the traditional formulae awakens a response at the present day." (p.237)

A little farther on we find the following:-

> "Most people would admit some measure of guilt for evils for which in their own lives they could not be held responsible, and they certainly share in the consequences of these evils. We cannot isolate our own from the lives of others or speak of them as separate.....Our spiritual life includes and is the spiritual life of countless others. This being so, there is one guilt upon all the

human race: and this Christ, by becoming a member of the human race, shares. How is that guilt to be redeemed? Surely there is only the way of suffering - not because an inscrutable Providence, less kind than mortals, decrees a blind payment of pain for pain, but because God is Love. There must be pain in the recognition of evil and pain in the effort to overcome. Therefore love must suffer and lay down its life. This is the supreme revelation of God given us in Christ. We should never have guessed at the meaning of this creating and reforming love had we not beheld the redemptive suffering of the Cross, where God's heart broke for the world: we see good, because it is good, crucified by evil, and out of death life springing and hope foe ever. And this we know is more than a single act of history: it is a process illuminated once and for all by that act - the steadfast and continuous purpose of God." (239)

The essential fact of Atonement is deeply interwoven with the essence of human life, and cannot be driven out by youhg or old.

APPENDIX B.
Aim of this Thesis.

Where lies the real need for the suffering and death of Jesus Christ?

The Argument of the present Thesis might be stated thus:- Consider that great primary truth of Christianity as a whole, the Incarnation. By that sovereign fact of the spiritual world entering into time a new realm is brought into being, a Divine humanity, a world in which our human nature is seen in its perfect state; a world moreover which we see carried beyond reach of decay or corruption in the Resurrection of Christ. The thought which this presents to the mind is that of a perfect humanity existing under ideal conditions, a City of God, the kind of humanity God intends, deathless, pure, perfect; its law, love; realising all our purest idals and endeavours with respect to our race.

But as yet this world consists of but one supreme Personality, one ideally perfect Man in fellowship with God. How is that world to be extended to include others? How is the whole race at large, - how is any single individual of the race - to attain this last blossom and flower of existence? How are we to become members of this high and perfect fellowship? Different systems of thought, philosophers, scientists, poets, dreamers, theologians, have answered this question in many ways: Christianity answers it by the doctrine of the Atonement. That is the Philosopher's Stone, the elixir vitae, the strait gate and the narrow way. It is the secret of the ages. According to Christianity, the Atonement is the one gate of entrance into the final and perfect human city.

Now I would take the broadest possible view of the Atonement. I would see in it every single method, every single power and word and influence that comes out from that unseen and perfect realm to transform our humanity into its likeness and to raise us to its citizenship. Not only the deep transactions of Gethsemane and Calvary, but the whole appearing of the supreme crown of existence in the God-Man: the Divine love that overflowed in His Advent - the gracious human [illegible] life of Jesus in its every act and word - the utter devotion that carried Him like a flint to the end - the final stroke of death - the silence of the grave - the triumph of the Resurrection - that whole miracle that rends the veil of time and matter and shows our humanity made perfect in one strong shining Figure on the stage of history: all that, every influence that flows from it, I would regard as belonging to the Atonement - the Fact of Christ in all its bearings on man's life.

We feel, however, that the whole matter does narrow itself down to one question - the question of the Death. What place has suffering, what place has death, in this great scheme?

It is clear that the Atonement is a manifestation of Divine love. The children were partakers of flesh and blood and He Himself likewise took part of the same. He became flesh because we were flesh, and by becoming flesh He beautified our nature and consecrated all its abode. That is the truth of the Incarnation. In the Incarnation we already have the union of God and man - the perfect oneness of the human and Divine - the point where they meet in a perfect fellowship and reconciliation,

which it is the purpose of the Atonement to accomplish. This is the aspect of the question which modern thinking tends to lay stress upon. There in the God-Man you have the final and perfect goal of humanity - the final stage we are all in the end to reach.

But the constant teaching of the Bible is that the suffering and death had to intervene - that before the race could be brought into harmony with this perfect type, Christ had to make the tremendous, dark descent, to enter into and take upon Himself all the worst consequences, the sorrow and shame, that sin has ever brought on men, and even that last utter darkness and banishment of the soul which the death of the sinner means. And the Bible teaching is that by His doing this great results were achieved and consequences flowed for the sinner that could not have come otherwise. There was so to speak, a foundation laid by that act, and by that alone, on which rests the possibility of sin being broken, the banishment and exlusion of the sinful soul being taken away, and our human nature being raised up into that higher life seen in Christ Himself.

The definite question, then, has to be faced - where lies the necessity, the dire need, of the <u>suffering and death of Christ</u> in order to this result being attained, in order to God's forgiveness of sin, and an Atonement being made beyween God and man?

The question is really this: Is that necessity to be found ultimately in God Himself, the Author of the Atonement; or is it to be found in the evil, the sin, that calls for the

Atonement?

There is an "objective element" in the Atonement. That is to say, over and above the moral effect of Christ's death on the mind and heart of man - its power to convince and persuade man - there is something that it does, an opus operatum, it exercises an objective effect. Now is this object God Himself, His will to forgive, or in some way His justification in forgiving? Or - is this objective effect in the Atonement wrought entirely upon the evil and not on God at all?

Now when we remember that God is the Author of the Atonement - that is is entirely the outcome and the free gift of His love and grace - it may seem a strange statement to make, but it appears to me the simple truth, that all post Anselmic theories of the doctrine, notwithstanding their great variety of type, all theories which admit an objective element at all, tend to regard the Atonement made by Christ as taking effect, in one way or other, on God, and as being therefore necessitated by something in God. They appear to minimise or fail to appreciate the real place of evil, its significance and power.

The point I wish to make is in stressing the evil - the evil will in man, the evil principle, the evil one -- or whatever it turn out to be.

It is always interesting to look on the road which the philosophical or theological pilgrim has travelled and to detect the point at which he would appear to have taken a wrong turning. We have such a point (as I would hold) in Descartes, when he gave an unduly subjective twist to epistemological

inquiry; and I am suggesting that Anselm, with his vigorous and scornful refutation of the Patristic idea of a "Ransom to the Devil", gave a wrong impetus to the Medieval thinkers and to the whole vast body of Reformation Theology - the effects of which may still be discerned in the most recent writers on the Atonement to day.

In his great thought of the Outraged Honour of God, and the need for an Infinite and Equivalent Satisfaction for an infinite Debt - based on the conceptions of Chivalry and the Germanic penal law - what Anselm did was → TO SHIFT THE WHOLE NECESSITY FOR THE DEATH OF CHRIST FROM THE SIDE OF THE DEVIL TO THE SIDE OF GOD. I desire to suggest that IT MUST BE SHIFTED BACK AGAIN if we are to understand the Atonement.

Signs are not wanting that Atonement theory is moving in this direction - see pages 96 - 99 of the Thesis.

APPENDIX C.
The "Ransom to the Devil".

I maintain that the truth lying in that picturesque old phrase, "a Ransom to the Devil", comes nearer than anything else to supplying a satisfactory rationale of the Atonement. God has an actual struggle in redeeming man - not a sham fight for the purposes of display or (in any sense whatever) for His own satisfaction. God saves by the skin of His teeth and by an agonising conflict.

In every type of theory which ignores and leaves out of sight the grim and terrible truth adumbrated in this ancient idea of a real ransom paid to, and a real deliverance from, an actual inimical power, there will be found something artificial, something failing to satisfy in depth and completeness.

It is artificial and ultimately shallow to regard God as sending forth His Son to die: in order to justify Himself; to satisfy His law; to vindicate His holiness; to preserve His moral government of the world; to give an exhibition, a revelation - even the supreme revelation - of His love and willingness to forgive; and (a fortiori) to punish, to punish man or sin or Christ. But I see nothing artificial or unreal in the thought that God had to do this in order to deliver man: God did not do it in order to be (in any sense whatever) right with Himself, but actually to redeem man. Much has been made of persuading man to repent by Christ's death: not enough has been said of actually enabling man to repent and return by delivering him, setting him free, through Christ's death.

APPENDIX D.

Summary of Theories.

I find that Dr. Horton, following the idea of Scott Lidgett's "Spiritual Principle in the Atonement", has given in the "Theological Symposium" (p.136-7) a fine and concise summary of theories of the Atonement - that is, of the real contribution made by each theory to the doctrine; and it may be useful (in order to have before the mind the course which thought has followed on this matter, and to avoid undue repition of details which appear in most discussions of the subject) to quote here what he says :-

> "The contributions of the great thinkers all have their assignes place. The first great thinker on the subject, Anselm, established once for all the notion that God Himself was concerned, in order to perfect His work in creation, to deal with sin. He showed also how man of himself could not make a satisfaction or get rid of it without weakening the sense of it. This was the main thought contributed before the Reformation. Calvinism added the notion that our Lord's life was a necessary preparation for the atoning sacrifice, that we are in abiding relationship with Him, and His Incarnation brought Him into the experience of the consequences of sin. To this, Grotius added the thought that by the sacrifece of Christ the moral government of the universe was vindicated, ~~by the slaying of the innocent~~, and the Divine judgement on sin expressed."
>
> -----(When one thinks of it, this idea of Grotius, which is often repeated by preachers and by popular writers on the Atonement to day, is - to say it without offence - really one of the most absurd thoughts, the most hateful theoughts, ever introduced into the history of the doctrine. In what possible sense can the moral government of the universe be vindicated by the slaying of the innocent, and how is God's mind on sin expressed by the punishment of the Sinless? These questions, though put forward a thousand times throughout the ages, are still entirely relevant and are absolutely condemnatory of that theory)-----

"In modern times Dr.Dale has the credit of bringing out the conception of righteousness as sonething quite distinct from the arbitrary will even of God, and the further credit of showing that God must mark the ill desert of sin by suffering, so that the sufferings of Christ are a necessary element in the Atonement. Dr.McLeod Campbell laid a strong stress on the spiritual nature of the Atonement, even on the need of entering into the mind of God concerning sin. ('Amen' to God's verdict on it). Maurice added the notion that the Lord fulfils the true life of humanity and becomes the sinless root of a new humanity. In Bishop Westcott there is a contributory touch, that it was part of the Lord's work to be made perfect through suffering, which evolved His highest capabilities. Bushnell brought out the connection between love and sacrifice, and showed how Cgrist entered into the curse. Finally, Ritschl has insisted on the vital bond of love between God and man, and on the truth that the essence of the Atonement is in ethical relations".

The spiritual nature of the Atonement, emphasised by Scott Lidgett, Horton, etc., helps to illustrate for the present day mind Maurice's great idea of Christ as our true life offering the perfect sacrifice for us and in us. No one can bear physical pain or make a physical sacrifice for another, but spiritually, Christ can interpenetrate our spirit and so His offering and sacrifice become ours.

APPENDIX E.

Kant - the "Self-Legislative Will"

Modern Theology owes a very great deal to Kant's tremendous fact of the SELF-LEGISLATIVE WILL. Indeed it is a real point de repere for Modern Theology, although this is not always recognised or acknowledged.

Kant's famous Categorical Imperative flows, as Ueberweg shows, from the Autonomy of the Will :-

> "Our moral dignity depends on our moral self-determination. Man in his character as a rational being or a thing-in-itself, gives the law to himself as a sensuous being or a phenomenon. In this (says Kant, who here treats the difference between thing-in-itself and phenomenon as a difference of worth) is contained the origin of duty." (Ueberweg. Hist.of Phil,II.I80-I)

It will be useful to recall Kant's own words on this matter (Groundwork. Engl.Trans.42,38-9) :-

> "Man's will is to be regarded as not subjected to the law simply, but so subjected as to be self-legislative, and upon this account, subjected to the law of which himself is the author.
> The will is cogitated as a faculty to determine itself to act according to the representation of given laws: and such a power can be met with in reasonable agents only. Now what serves the will for the ground of its self-determination is called the 'end'. Let there be granted somewhat whose existence has in itself an absolute worth, and which, as in itself an end, is in itself the ground of its own given laws. Then herein and here alone would lie the ground of the possibility of a Categorical Imperative, i.e., of a practical law. Now we may cease to wonder how all former attempts to investigate the ultimate principle of morals should have proved unsuccessful. The inquirers saw that man was bound to law by the idea of duty: but it did not occur to them that he was bound simply by his own law universal, the prerogative of his nature fitting him for a universal legislator, and so subjecting him to the law emanating from his own will. This autonomy of the will is the supreme principle of morality."

I have quoted these familiar and fundamental words of Kant

because both Coleridge and Maurice, of whom I am treating, derive from this in their final ideas on the Atonement - Maurice through Coleridge. This epoch-making conception of the will proved germinal in those fundamental thoughts which lie at the basis of the theory in both writers - such as Evil and its causation, Original Sin, the Redemption of the Will.

APPENDIX F.

Coleridge, Kant, Jacobi.

As the difference between the Categories of Understanding and the Ideas of Reason is one of the main pillars of the entire Kantian system, Kant's own view of the matter in the Critique of Pure Reason may be recalled :-

> "We defined the Understanding as the 'faculty of rules': Reason may be defined as the 'faculty of principles'. The Understanding may be a faculty for the production of unity of phenomena by virtue of rules; the Reason is a faculty for the production of unity of rules (of the Understanding) under principles. Reason therefore never applies directly to experience or to any sensuous object; its object is on the contrary the Understanding; to the manifold condition of which it gives a unity a priori by means of conceptions, a unity which may be called a rational unity and which is of a nature very different from the unity produced by the Understanding.
>
> The results of all the dialectical attempts of pure Reason not only confirm the truth of what we have already proved in our Analytic, namely, that all inferences which would lead us beyond the limits of experience are fallacious and groundless, but it at the same time teaches us this important lesson, that human reason has a natural indlination to overstep these limits, and that transcendental ideas are as much the natural property of reason as categories are of the understanding. There exists this difference, however, that while the categories never mislead us, outward objects always being in perfect harmony therewith, ideas are the parents of irresistable illusions, the severest and most subtle criticism being required to save us from the fallacies which they induce."
> (Critique of Pure Reason. Engl.Trans,Bohn.pp.2I3.2I4.394)

It is obvious that Coleridge's view is based generally on Kant here, the main difference being that Coleridge in his treatment of the matter entirely abandons Kant's scepticism. The ideas of Reason for Coleridge are not illusory, they are facts, they give actual truth, In this he differs materially from Kant.

"There is nothing that Kant repeats more frequently or more unambiguously than the statement that these (the Ideas of Reason) are mere ideas, yielding no cognition proper, but entangling the mind in metaphysical paralogisms and antinomies. They have regulative but not constitutive truth. We are not entitled to state them as dogmas". (Caldecott and Mackintosh,Theism.I8I) Kant of course in his Practical Reason brings back as faith or belief and moral certainty what he had previously ruled out as actual knowledge; but for Coleridge, what Reason gives us is knowledge, direct vision. There is not a trace of the dualism so deeply embedded in Kant's thought. Coleridge's whole emphasis rests on the despising of the Understanding as a faculty for giving us spiritual truth, while Kant despises the Reason as such.

In this respect Coleridge has been regarded as being nearer to Jacobi than to Kant. Ueberweg says:-

> "Coleridge in the Aids to Reflection insisted on the distinction between Reason and Understanding more in the sense of Jacobi than Kant. Jacobi, the philosopher of faith, sought to establish the authority of rational and direct faith in opposition to philosophic, system-making thought. He censures Kant's argumentation in favour of the validity of the postulates in the Critique of Pure Reason as being without force, since holding a thing true for merely practical reasons (believing merely because one needs to believe) is self destructive, and held that we have as well an immediate conviction of the supra-sensible, to which Kant's postulates of the Practical Reason relate, as of the existence of sensible objects. This conviction he denominates faith; in later works he terms the faculty by which we immediately apprehend and are aware of the supra-sensible, reason. 'There lives in us,' he says,'a spirit which comes immediately from God, and conststutes man's most intimate essence. We may even hazard the bold assertion that we believe in God because we see Him because we see Him, although we cannot see Him with the bodily eyes!" (Hist.of Phil.200)

This is exactly the sense that"Reason" bears for Coleridge - direct vision, immediate,real contact, in man's relation to the spiritual or supernatural. The Kantian want of theoretic certainty and despair of actual knowledge with regard to these supersensuous realities, is entirely surmounted in Jacobi and in Coleridge.

> "With Jacobi, opposed to the explanatory understanding, we must acknowledge a non-explanatory, positively revelatory, unconditionally deciding reason, or belief of reason. As there is a perception of sense, so there must be a perception of reason, against which latter, demonstration will as little avail as against the former." (Schwegler. History of Philosophy.Engl.Trans.p.252)

Jacobi himself says :-

> "The reason is the direct contact with reality, which it affirms and even is. It apprehends the 'me' and the 'thee', it apprehends above all the great Thee, God: apprehends, and we may say, appropriates.And it apprehends them at one bound - in one salto mortale - because it is really in implicit possession of them." (Jacobi's Works.III.53. Quoted by Wallace,Logic of Hegel.I.33).

All this is exactly Coleridge. Kant however, as is well known, is by no means consistent in his scepticism, and indeed could really be made to admit, in some place or other of his work, all that Coleridge would contend for as to the truth given by reason. Coleridge himself is acute enough to discern this. There are some very interesting remarks on the matter to be found ~~in a letter published~~ in his ~~Lectures on Shakespeare:-~~ Biographia Literaria

> After speaking of Kant as almost a Platonist (to whom ideas are constitutive) rather than an Aristotelian (to whom they are merely regulative), he proceeds: "Kant had been in imminent danger of persecution during the reign of the late king of Prussia, and it is probable that he had little inclination in his old age to act over again the fortunes and the hair-breadth escapes of Wolf.....His caution was groundless. In spite therefore of his own declarations, I could never believe that it was possible for him to have meant no more by his Noumenon, or thing-in-itself, than his mere words express; or that in his own

> conception he confined the whole plastic power to the forms of the intellect, leaving for the external cause, for the materiale of our sensations, a matter without form, which is diubtless inconceivable. I entertain doubts likewise, whether in his own mind he laid all the stress which he appears to do on the moral postulates." (Biog.Lit.77.)

Coleridge here expresses a doubt as to the reality of Kant's scepticism. Does he mean that he really believes Kant's ideas of reason to be not merely regulative but constitutive?

Indeed however, the whole subject both in Coleridge and in Kant is more or less confused. Neither writer, it must be observed, is entirely consistent in hi ideas of the distinction between reason and understanding, For example, Kant says:-

> "If pure reason can be practical and is actually so, as the consciousness of the moral law proves, then it is still only one and the same reason which, whether in a theoretical or a practical point of view, judges according to a priori principles,&c.(Crit.of Pract.Reas.II.2)

On this Caldecott and Mackintosh make the following comment:-

> "This identification of the theoretical and practical reason if pressed, would go far to undermine the dualism between thought and being which runs through so much of Kant's philosophy. But the philosopher's statements are ambiguous,&c. (223)

APPENDIX G.

Further Point of contact - Rationalising. (p.35)
Note on Epistemology - Descartes' error.

There is one further point which is essential in the teaching of the two writers and which I would refer to at some length in this Appendix.

In the aim and purpose of all their work in Christian Theology both Coleridge and Maurice are bent on "rationalising", They desire - in words I may borrow from F.R.Tennant - "to establish the reasonableness of Christian conviction and the intellectual status of Theology."

This is important. It involves that both thinkers believe profoundly that in our thought we are in touch with ultimate reality. Both are unaffected by that radical dualism which has dogged the steps of Philosophy ever since Descartes - and which swallows up Kant. Both also are free from the psychological method of starting from individual experience in the search for truth - a method for which, in modern philosophy, Descartes is also responsible, and which recent theology owes largely to Schleiermacher; a method, it may be added, which makes it extremely doubtful if reality is ever actually reached at all. Coleridge's "reason" and Maurice's "participation in the Divine" mean that man's highest thought is in unquestioned contact with the ultimately real.

It may be of interest to refer to the subtle point of pure philosophy here involved: it is by no means beside our present

question, for in this whole matter of the Christian Redemption the modern mind must be certain that it is truth, ultimate and absolute truth, that we are dealing with (so far of course as that is accessible in any case), and the question of the relation of our human knowledge to reality is one that vitally concerns, for the thinking mind, any matter in hand,

In that distinguished book, "Philosophical Theology" by F.R.Tennat of Camgridge, we have a typical present day example of that subjective, psychological tendency that characterises the prevailing view of the relation of Subject and Object in knowledge. It is actually a false epistemology, an artificial separation struck between the self and the objects of its knowledge which really dates back to the original illegitimate and unnecessary dualism of Descartes.

Tennant says:-

> "The ordo cognoscendi is the sole route that possibly may lead to a known ordo essendi: psychology is the fundamental science, the first propaideutic to philosophy." (Op.Cit.I.p.II)

And this psychological obsession is well illustrated thus:

> "The notion of a substance as an abiding reality is doubtless derived from knowledge of the self. It is knowledge of self and of other selves that encouraged the venture involved in believing things to continue a life history when not being perceived. Thus, to conceive of "things" is to personify, to assimilate to self, to interpret scattered data in terms of self, and so to understand. Thinghood, permanence, substiantiality, efficiency and interaction (which we attribute to the non-self) are all partial analogues derived from self as paradigm."(I.I77)

> "Our knowledge of the external world is, from its very foundations, a matter of more or less precarious and alogical analogy, rather than of self-evidence; of hope

> and venture that have been rewarded. Its certainty or necessity is practical not logical; its exact intellectual status is that of 'probable belief'.(I.183)

The position here stated is at once recognised. It plunges us into the midst of a well known philosophical quagmire - the relation between the mind and its object. This is a perennial question, a question which has to be settled at the threshold of every system of metaphysics or of theology, and there have been and still are various schools of thought. One who would deal with any fundamental question whatever - as I am dealing with the doctrine of Atonement - must gain some standpoint on the matter satisfying to his own mind; and therefore, in spite of all that has come and gone in the turbulent history of mental science, I venture entirely to question the whole position here exemplified in Tennant's work. I cannot pretend of course to come forward with a refutation of this subjective standpoint which will satisfy all - inasmuch as the Scottish Realists, Hegel, and other distinguished persons have tried to do so and have failed! - but what I can do is to express the conviction I have always held that the whole difficulty is an artificial one and arose from the initial error of Descartes. Descartes with his "dubitatio" and his "cogito ergo sum" built a wall around the self, which philosophy - misled by Descartes - has never really been able to break through. He put asunder what God Had joined. He made a ~~chasm~~ chasm between the self and its objects which has never since been bridged, and which ought never to have been there.

The whole attitude is wrong. We do not really start with self

at all in our knowledge of things, nor do we start with knowledge itself as a psychological process: we start with "outward" objects, "outward" reality as the primary thing. To begin with, we know nothing of knowledge - what we know is objects. It is conscious reflection (like Descartes') that begins to concentrate on the knowing process, and then objects disappear. (It is a good thing after all, no doubt, that Descartes did make this error, for it led philosophy into a path which, while it has lain amid infinite agonies, at last brought us to the magnificent country of Kant and Hegel!)

But I hold that Descartes would have been much more justified in doubting the self as an independent entity, than in doubting its objects. The primary certainty after all is not the self but the things we know. These are the indubitable things, and when the self begins to find itself and to know itself, it is in these outer objects it knows itself. Of course, once reflection has begun, and when the thinker has begun to follow Descartes and to understand his famous "doubt", the mind is led into a track which it is extremely difficult if not impossible to get out of, and the painful and protracted journey of modern philosophy begins.

Self is the snare, intellectually as well as morally. Descartes was sure and certain only of himself - in reality the one thing he actually knew nothing about until he began to reflect! - and so the "shades of the prison house begin to close."

To return to Tennant's work, then, I suggest that psychology

is not the fundamental science, nor is the ordo cognoscendi prior to the ordo essendi. The outward, the given, is the primary real, and should never have been made "outward" at all.

In Theology is not this very much what the Barthian school has been emphasising? Schleiermacher started Theology on a wrong route, beginning from the psychological point of view, from man's Christian experience and feeling. But that is not the first thing. It is the object, the given, that is first - God. Not experience, but that which is given in experience, is the true starting point. Start with reality and never leave it - not with reflection upon the process of experiencing, or with knowledge. The psychological, experemtial starting point creates a dualism which no man can reconcile.

Coleridge (with Jacobi rather than Kant), and Maurice (with Hofmann,&c.) assume as a starting point that point of reality and truth which they never lose and never question. They start with that which is logically and really prior to any psychological process as consciously known: with God, with the actual, direct vision of reality. In primitive, naive experience, God is a reality (psychological reflection comes later), and God given in experience should be the real starting point for Theology.

Notwithstanding the ages of profound and painful philosophising, I believe one is justified in thinking that something is far wrong when it is considered a positive feat, a wonderful and subtle victory of intellectual gymnastics possible only

to the few - to reach reality and to know the real! - when the plain fact is that all men are living and working, rejoicing and suffering and knowing in the midst of the real all along from the cradle to the grave! With deference to the philosophers, there is something wrong and out of joint. The difficulty must be artificial. But it is - to the present day - a triumphant feat, the clever act of a champion philosopher, to get at reality!

In "The Psychological Approach to Reality" Francis AVELING says: "The problems concerning knowledge are seen to be psychological problems"(p.4). A wrong assumption at once. They arenothing of the sort. The problems concerning knowledge (i.e. epistemological problems) are logical or philosophical rather than psychological. He describes knowledge as "a subjective or psychological event with an objective reference." This is knowledge as seen later and studied by the psychologist. In knowledge itself to begin with, the "objective reference" is the essence of the fact. Aveling confuses Psychology and Epistemology from the start. If you begin with psychology in your thoughts of reality, you will never get beyond it.

> "The question recurs: is there a truth relation, as we conceive this, between something mental on the one hand, and something objective or extra-mental on the other? What is the criterion in virtue of which, supposing a truth relation to be possible, we may know that it actually obtains in any given case?"(Aveling.I7).

From the point of view of the professed psychologist such a question is one of quite extraordinary interest; but looked at from another point of view, it well illustrates what I am contending against - the psychological obsession in epistemology.

The question Aveling puts assumes a separation which does not really exist between subject and object in the fact of knowledge. It is this assumption that gave modern philosophy (with Descartes) its false start. It is the assumption underlying the whole of Kant's critical work. It creates an artificial dualism. Kant's "Ideas of Reason" would never have been called by him "illusory" but for the thought contained in this question of Aveling. Aveling says:-

> "It is from the immediate awareness of the substance or substantiality of the self that our notion of substance is derived and analogically applied to other experiences: if we look on a lump of gold, or a tree or horse as substances it is not because we have any direct intuition of reality lying behind their phenomena; but because we interpret the phenomena in the light of our immediate insight into our own subsistent self"(207).

I question this. It is a common assumption, but it is simply the psychological obsession. On page 313 (Aveling) we read: "We have found an extra-mental world long before we have begun to reflect upon it, or upon the way in which we have come to believe in it. We are in fact, naturally realists before we can methodically become solipsists."

That is the truth. And it is reflection, then, that creates the difficulty about the relation of the mind to the object. Coleridge and Maurice are both among those who bring us back to the fresh air and freedom of a pre-Cartesian possession and enjoyment of the actual reality.

APPENDIX H. (Thesis,99-103)

Divine Causality

Divine "Impassibility"

In a very interesting discussion entitled "The Necessity of Redemption", by P.Hartill, the Divine Causality apperas under the thought of the transmutation of evil into a higher good.

> "If the existence of evil is not to reduce the total goodness of the universe, this can be achieved in ine way only - by a creative act of God which transmutes the evil by drawing from it a greater good, a good which comes into existence only through the evil and its transmutation.(35) An adequate atoning act.....must be an act which transmutes the very meaning of that fact which it cabnot undo. Just so has the crime of the Cross been transformed into a unique manifestation of Divine love, so that Christian devotion has expressed itself in the famous words, "O felix culpa quae talem et tantum meruit habere Redemptorem!" It must be such an act that the world is better than it would have been had all else remained the same and yet sin had not been committed." (88)

This is a well known position. Evil is the means to a greater good, therefore ultimately it is not evil at all - a familiar form of theodicy, the "justifying of the ways of God to man" Hartill arrives at this on account of his somewhat mechanical postulate that if God is to be perfect goodness, the total sum of good in the world must not be diminished. But if evil is evil at all in any sense, if there is any evil existing even for a moment although it may have the best possible purpose, the sum total of goodness is diminished thereby. Such mechanical ideas are alien to a truly ethical universe.

In order to maintain unimpaired the Divine transcedence, the omnipotence and "all-in-allnes" of God, Hartill also brings

forward the conception of the Divine "Impassibility", which has recently been receiving much attention.

> "St.Thomas Aquinas teaches that the passive potentiality which is the principle of being acted upon by something else (principium patiendi ab alio) cannot exist in God. We find that Anselm not only stated the problem but gave the right answer when he said that God is impassible in Himself but full of compassion in respect to us. We may conclude that the doctrine of Divine Impassibility..... is valuable in thought because it guards against false ideas of a finite God and conserves the important truth of the transcendence of the Creator. It also preserves the assurance, which modern theories would take away, that amid all the changes of this fleeting world we may repose in God's eternal changelessness"(II2).

But it is to be remarked that God's transcendence, perfection, changelessness, etc., are to be construed as qualities belonging to an ethical Person, a Father, and that they characterise God as such. They do not exist in God as they would, for example in a physical whole or a metaphysical absolute. In regard to this whole subject, one cannot but observe that the ethical often tends to be lost sight of.

Mr.Bertrand R.Brasnett has given us an exceedingly able study of this question in a book called "The Suffering of the Impassible God", in the preface to which he says that this is an "extremely difficult problem", in which "a dogmatic temper is at once undesirable and unscientific".
The following is his view of Impassibility:-

> "We must ground the Divine Impassibility on the Divine Purpose. Ever passible in His sympathy, God is eternally impassible in His will"(p.6).

That is a reasonable statement. And with regard to God being the ultimate Author of evil, Brasnett speaks cautiously thus:-

> "Evil is God's responsibility to this extent at least, that without Him it could not be. It draws life from Him at second hand, for He holds in being those who give life to evil(p.I)."
> "It has to be remembered that such power ro constrain Deity as may be possessed by the sins of men was given to them by God(28)." "God in His infinite wisdom and perfect goodness thought fit to create in a certain way..... By creating a potentially sinful world God was seeking to obtain certain results presumably unobtainable in any less hazardous fashion"(73-4).

This is commendable as being cautious, tentative, undogmatic; but there are two assumptions underlying this position which I have already dealt with as being essentially unethical, and which, therefore, cannot be allowed: First, that God in creating free will must be regarded as somehow ultimately responsible for the sin it originates; and Second, that evil may be in reality after all a good because the means to a good that could not have been without it. Such assumptions involve again the idea of the Divine Causality.

On the other hand, Brasnett has strong words on the reality and power of evil:-

> "For Christian ethics sin is never negligible, it is of profound importance and vast significance. It may be horrible, loathsome, deadly, but whatever it is,it is never a thing indifferent. It may cost man his hope of eternal life; it has cost God the life of an Eternal Son. For us sin mars and injures even the bliss of Deity, it breaks in upon the holy joy of God, and lessens it; it stays the purpose of the Almighty, and chacks the will of the Eternal(72)."

There at once is all I contend for. Only I say - all that is <u>ultimately real</u>, not a mere appearance to us; and <u>a fortiori</u>, not a cunning artifice designed and put forward by God Himself for higher purposes! It seems to me that the Divine Impassibi-

ity (if the truth of that doctrine were established), would nvolve the merely apparent character of human freedom and the urely phenomenal character of evil. Neither <u>will</u> nor <u>evil</u> is real f God cannot <u>really suffer</u>.

But Brasnett, while like a true student he is searching for ight and is willing to be fair all round to every side of the uestion, is certainly sound at heart on this matter. He says:-

> "Even such an absolute Creator is in a sense dependent on His creation, both before and after He has callrd it into being.....A God Who either intends to create, or Who has created, is not an absolutely unfettered God; He is to some extent dependent on His thoughts or deeds; if He were not, whatever else He might be, He would not be rational. (73).
>
> "We find the Divine blessedness in the consciousness of a will that knows - not that it will prevail - but that at whatever cost of agony or tears, it will continue to will the right. The power of God's will is seen not so much in its power to realise itself externally, as in its power to be utterly unmoved by, and completely impassible to , moral evil"(148).

Now what can that mean but that God has an antagonist - an ntagonist with real power over against God, power to make God uffer - an antagonist in whom lies the real necessity for the tonement, the necessity for the death of Christ if man is to e delivered?

APPENDIX I. (Thesis,I03-I07)

On The Devil.

A vast literature has gathered around this figure. As a good example I may recall some observations of Sir Walter Scott on the character of Louis XIth of France:-

> "That sovereign was of a character so purely selfish - so guiltless of entertaining any purpose unconnected with his ambition, covetousness, and desire of selfish enjoyment, that he almost seems an incarnation of the devil himself, permitted to do his utmost to corrupt our idea of honour at its very source. Nor is it to be forgotten that Louis possessed to a great extent that caustic wit which can turn into ridicule all that a man does for any other person's advantage but his own, ans was, therefore, peculiarly qualifidd to play the part of a cold hearted and sneering fiend.
>
> In this point of view, Goethe's conception of the character and reasoning of Mephistopheles, the tempting spirit in the singular play of Faust, appears to me more happy than that which has been formed by Byron, and even than the Satan of Milton. These last great authors have given to the Evil Principle something which elevates and dignifies his wickedness; a sustained and unconquerable resistance against Omnipotence itself - a lofty scorn of suffering compared with submission, and all those points of attraction in the author of evil, which have induced Burns and others to consider him as the hero of the Paradise Lost. The great German poet has, on the contrary, rendered his seducing spirit a being who, otherwise totally unimpassioned, seems only to have existed for the purpose of increasing by his persuasions and temptations, the mass of moral evil, and who calls forth by his seductions those slumbering passions which otherwise might have allowed the human being who was the object of the evil spirit's operations to pass the tenour of his life in tranquility. For this purpose Mephistopheles is, like Louis XI, endowed with an acute and depreciating spirit of caustic wit, which is employed incessantly in undervaluing and vilifying all actions the consequences of which do not lead certainly and directly to self-gratification" (Introduction to Quentin Durward).

Bunyan may be taken as a supreme example of the struggle of the individual man with the devil - which is so common in Religious Biography. In the Hibbert Journal, Vol.XXVII. there is a very

acute analysis by Dr.J.B.Baillie of Bunyan's spiritual struggle.

> "Bunyan was from the first thrown back on himself; self analysis and self criticism became his preoccupation and his only resort in finding a way out of his perplexities..... The accumulation of sins committed in the past rose up in judgement to condemn him beyond dispute, and these could not be forgotten or repudiated. He was answerable for them. He plumbs the very depths of self will, which is the essence of sin, and touches bottom when he deliberately rejects in a mood of wilfulness what he clearly knows to be the only means of securing the righteousness he seeks. This, which he calls the sin against the Holy Ghost, gave him as might be expected the greatest agony of soul.....It is small surprise that at times his brain seemed to reel, and that he lost his balance. With a less solid and sane personality the strain would have proved too much. It is probable that his mental security was maintained just because he regarded all this evil as due not to himself as such but to the outside agency of the devil. His nature was sinful and evil because it had been corrupted by the devil. If the evil had had its origin really in himself his nature would have been shattered by the struggle. As long as he could put all the blame on the devil he could ascribe the cause to something outside himself. The struggle for freedom became a struggle with a real cause apart from himself; the struggle was a real struggle, not a process of self destruction. The belief in the devil therefore kept him sane, while it left the devil occupied in devising endless means of torturing him. He seems to have doubted everything except the reality of the devil. According to Bunyan in the Holy War the devil was an archangel who was expelled from Heaven for rebellion, and finds occupation by way of revenge in thwarting the Divine purpose for the universe, and more particularly in captivating the soul of man."
>
> Dr.Baillie adds: "It is not difficult to understand how the devil came out of Heaven - the difficulty is to understand how he ever came into it! (pp.391-6-8)"

As the writer further says - "Neither Milton nor Bunyan throws any light on the subject!"

Who has thrown light on that subject? The entrance of evil into the universe, who can tell us?

The thing of supreme importance in this account of Bunyan's struggle is this:- that sin is my own - yet the devil's. I am

answerable for it, yet I retain my sanity under the weight of that responsibility because, in fighting it, I am fighting an actual adversary outside myself. It is I, and yet not I. There is a deep mystery but also a deep truth there."Nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me". "The good I would I do not, the evil that I would not, that I do".

Sin is "original". Coleridge is absolutely right. It originates in me, in my will. But there appears another will in my will, working with it, attacking it. Is that other will jointly responsible, or do I take up its guilt entirely into my own will? Perhaps the best that can be said is what appears in Bunyan's case: I am responsible, but in such a way - by reason of the other will which I feel to be acting in and on my will - that I preserve my sanity, and in fighting to destroy the evil, I am <u>not entirely fighting for my own destruction</u>.
(Maurice's own fine analysis of the experience here in question is quoted in this Thesis,pp.104-5).

The same thought of an evil person or principle acting on & my will and somehow controlling me, appears in Moberly's idea of "Incomplete Penitence". His doctrine of the Atonement is that of a "Vicarious Penitence" on the part of Christ for us; and discussing this, he says:- "Because sin is part of me, part of what I am, I cannot wholly detest it even if I would. Penitence is always incomplete". (Quoted by W.H.Moberly,"Foundations". p.295)

That is to say, it is <u>I</u> who sin, keep sinning, love sin and cling to it, or am helpless under it. Part of me never repents,

so to speak. That is how the devil acts in me. That is the ultimate evil. It is this that Christ has to fight in His death.