

“ATONEMENT AND PERSONALITY.”¹

DR. MOBERLY'S book is little less than a complete system of theology. It deals with such fundamental questions and the way in which it deals with them is itself so fundamental and so far-reaching that, either directly or by logical consequence, all the great doctrines of our faith seem to be involved. It is long indeed since a book appeared which gave the same impression of a whole series of connected problems not only handled thoughtfully but really *thought out*, traced back to their deepest roots and followed through to the very end.

And then the reasoned system thus constructed is so firmly knit together, its logical cohesion is so admirable, that it claims—and reasonably claims—to be accepted as a whole.

It is just this inner cohesion that increases the difficulty of those who come to the book more or less from without, with a different set of ideas in their minds and with something which, however inferior, is yet of the nature of a system of their own. They will not find it so easy as they do with most books to accept and assimilate a point here and a point there. What they have before them presents itself as a complete recasting—or perhaps more correctly a complete re-interpretation—of their whole creed. It will seem to the reader at times as though this re-interpretation had to be either taken or left as it stands, and could not be partly taken and partly left. The present paper is an attempt, which the writer thinks will have to be made by

¹ *Atonement and Personality*. By R. C. Moberly, D.D. (Murray).

others besides himself, to see how far any such separation of parts is possible.

Before going further let us add to the description by saying that the style in which the book is written reflects the qualities of the thought. The book is executed, as it is conceived, in the "grand style." The very construction of the paragraphs is such as befits a great book and not a small one. Perhaps there is just a little redundance of illustration and exposition. We are sometimes tempted to ask whether, when a thing has been said as well as it can possibly be said in words of one syllable, it is quite necessary to repeat it or to repeat it more than once in words a good deal longer. But the important thing is that style and thought together are to an extraordinary degree consecutive, clear-cut, exact. If the reader experiences any difficulty we may be sure that it never arises from real vagueness or haziness or superficiality. Dr. Moberly emphatically knows his own mind, and it will be the reader's fault if he also does not know it. At the same time, though keenly logical, the book is the very reverse of dry and hard. It glows with intense conviction, with the inspiration of a lofty ideal; and yet the glow is subdued by the consciousness of dealing with the most sacred themes.

In short the book is one of such high distinction both in matter and form that I should hesitate to say what I really think about it or to assign to it the place in English theology that I believe it really holds. I may perhaps do so before I conclude.

It should be said further that every possible help is given to the reader. There is a motto in Greek (Gal. vi. 14). There is a dedication, which is really a summing up in brief of the central thought of the book. There follows an analysis of the contents which is remarkably full and able. And to complete the whole there is an excellent index. Seldom has a book been set before the public in which so

much was done to make the course of the argument clear and intelligible. And seldom has an argument been so commended by *gravitas, dignitas, pietas, reverentia*.

I.

I said that the dedication contains the gist of the whole volume. It is as follows: TO | THE CHURCH | ONE HOLY CATHOLIC | THE BODY OF THE SPIRIT | OF JESUS CHRIST | VERY GOD OF VERY GOD | INCARNATE | WHICH IS | THE REGENERATION AND HOPE | OF THE WHOLE WORLD.

It may surprise some readers to see that there is not a word here that suggests what they are in the habit of associating with Atonement; and it may be well to say at once that Atonement is to be taken throughout in the largest sense. It is not a part of what we sometimes call "the scheme or process of redemption," but the whole of it. I shall presently ask whether a certain portion of the process is not emphasized rather too exclusively, whether it is not made rather too much to absorb the rest. But in the meantime the terms of the dedication will explain what I meant at the outset when I said that the book touched in turn upon all the most fundamental doctrines of Christianity. It deals at very close quarters with the whole question of the Incarnation. It deals at equally close quarters with the whole doctrine of the Trinity. Its leading thought is an exposition of the nature and work of the Holy Spirit.

I do not know what will be the feeling of others, but I confess that to me the treatment of all this side of the subject is extraordinarily helpful and attractive. It happens that I have myself for some time past been engaged more particularly with these topics. And not only do I constantly find Dr. Moberly suggesting the very word or formula that I want, but I should also say that, as well as I can judge, the whole of my experience and read-

ing goes to confirm his conclusions. I certainly do not know any other book on these subjects which approaches this in value. It is bold with the boldness that comes when a thing has been really thought out; and the boldness is never, to the best of my belief, otherwise than justified.

I should like to quote and to quote freely; but I must content myself with setting down a few heads on which I would refer the reader to the book itself.

The doctrine of the Trinity is essentially a doctrine of Trinity *in* Unity. The basal truth is that God is one. The further revelation of Divine "Persons" explains and expands but does not contradict this. "The personal distinction in Godhead is a distinction within, and of, unity: not a distinction which qualifies unity, or usurps the place of it, or destroys it" (pp. xxiii. 83, 154 f., 202).

The popular theology verges dangerously upon Tritheism. The word "person" is the best that can be used. And yet in using it we ought to lay stress rather on its positive than on its negative side. We must guard against being misled by our own experience of personality. We should think of the Divine Persons as "mutually inclusive" rather than "mutually exclusive" (pp. xxiii. 156-63, 202).

The safeguard against Sabellianism lies in the word "mutual." The relations of the Divine Persons to each other are mutual relations. But Sabellianism "degrades the Persons of Deity into aspects"; and "there can be no mutual relations between aspects" (pp. 80, 165).

Christ is God, not generically but identically. For the word God does not admit of a plural. And Christ is also Man, not generically but inclusively. He is not one man amongst many. The nearest analogy for His relation to mankind is that of Adam; and even that analogy is imperfect. His Humanity "was not merely the Humanity of a finite creature, but the Humanity of the Infinite God." It had therefore a unique capacity for universal relation. And

the means whereby that universal relation is realized is His Spirit (pp. xx., 88 ff., 204). [This of course is difficult; but the difficulty is one that the Christian theologian cannot escape; and I know no treatment of it that is so helpful as Dr. Moberly's.]

In our insistence upon the Two Natures in Christ we are in danger of falling into Nestorian dualism. "The phrase 'God and man' is of course perfectly true. But it is easy to lay undue emphasis on the 'and.' And when this is done—as it is done every day—the truth is better explained by varying the phrase. 'He is not two, but one, Christ.' He is, then, not so much God *and* man as God *in, and through, and as, man.*" It is a mistake to try to keep open, "as it were, a sort of non-human sphere, or aspect, of the Incarnation" (pp. xx., 96 f.; cf. 94).

The dominant idea in the minds of the New Testament writers is that of the Incarnation. The revelation both of the "Son" and of the "Spirit" has reference to this and grows out of it. The title "Son" is given to our Lord in the New Testament primarily as the Incarnate. To say this is not to imply that the terms "Father" and "Son" have not a further truth in regard to the eternal relations of the Godhead; but the order in which they are revealed arises out of the Incarnation (pp. xxiv., 184 ff.).

Hence the many passages, especially the salutations of the Epistles, in which Two of the Divine Persons appear to be mentioned without the Third, are by no means a "maimed Trinitarian formula." They contain no direct reference to the Trinity. The primary reference is rather to the Incarnation—to God as Eternal and God as Incarnate. But really the Third Person, though not mentioned, is implied. It is through the Holy Spirit that "grace and peace" come from God *to us* (pp. xxiv. 187-95).

I very much wish that space allowed me to develop these points as they deserve. But I have much yet to say; and

I very much hope that the reader who seeks enlightenment on these deep mysteries will seek it, not in these pages, but in those of the book itself. The references have been given partly to indicate where help may be had on subjects that are naturally difficult and abstruse, and partly to illustrate the wealth of valuable matter that surrounds the main course of the argument.

II.

But it is time to set out more directly what that argument is.

It starts from an analysis of the connected ideas of punishment, penitence, forgiveness. The main object of such punishment as comes within the range of Atonement is to produce penitence. It is penitence that really atones. Forgiveness is the correlative of "forgiveableness." It is not simply not punishing; or treating as if innocent; or regarding as innocent. These things are not even moral apart from a justifying cause. The justification is to be sought in penitence, which is a real change of self wrought from within.

Real penitence—not only the perfection but any adequate degree of penitence—is to simple human nature impossible. Perfect penitence requires not only contrition for sin, but complete identity of the self with the holiness which condemns sin. This combination is to be found only in Christ, whose death upon the cross was as it were a vicarious penitence perfect in its kind.

The great question is, How is this transcendent act of penitence on the part of Christ to be brought home to the human soul? And the answer is, Through the operation of the Holy Spirit transforming the human self from within; making the objective subjective; renewing our nature, so that it is no longer ours but Christ's, not by the destruction of our own personality but by its consummation. Pente-

cost is the true complement of Calvary. Calvary without Pentecost is not yet in vital relation with ourselves. Its virtue becomes ours through the indwelling Spirit of Christ.

These are the main lines of the argument, very imperfectly sketched. I will assume that most of those who read this will obtain a closer acquaintance with it. The hints that have been given may be enough to hang our comments upon; and they may in what follows receive some extension.

The points on which I propose to comment more particularly are three—(1) the conception of forgiveness as necessarily implying "forgiveableness"; (2) the mode in which the transition from objective to subjective is effected, as involving the denial of anything in the nature of a "transaction"; (3) the view of the indwelling Spirit as ultimately constituting the true self.

Now it is to be observed that on each of these central points Dr. Moberly's treatment is in the fullest possible accord with the tendencies of modern thought. Like him, modern thought also denies that forgiveness can be separated from forgiveableness. Like him, it repudiates any idea of a "transaction." Like him, not quite so broadly, but yet in an active section of its representatives, it is prepared to break down the distinctness of the individual. And over and above all this it must needs welcome the bringing of so large a part of the spiritual world under the dominion of rigorous and unchangeable laws.

This relation of Dr. Moberly's book to modern thought is, I need not say, a very important matter. It shears away at one stroke a whole forest of objections to Christianity. It supplies a theory in which many of the most cultivated minds may well be content to rest. It justifies the ways of God to men on a scale to which it would not be easy to find a parallel.

I am well aware of this; and I am also well aware that

the questions which I am about to raise and the criticisms which I am about to offer are not at all likely to meet with so favourable a reception in these quarters. I cannot say that I feel this to be wholly a misfortune. I have no wish to challenge the theory for those who desire to accept it. All I wish to do is to vindicate a place for another and older theory and to throw a shield, if I may, over those who cannot readily persuade themselves to part with it. It seems to me that this is just a case where the Christian Church should recognize alternative views as tenable.

III.

The first question that I should have to ask would be whether we can expect to make good a theodicy on so vast a scale. A theory such as that which is propounded to us seems almost to eliminate mystery from a large part, and that one of the most profound parts, of the dealings of God with men. I should not object to the theory if it took the form of one possible explanation of those dealings. What I stumble at are the negatives by which it is accompanied. I mean the strong assertions which meet us from time to time that such and such a thing cannot be.

I fall back upon Butler's *Analogy*. We live under a scheme of things imperfectly comprehended. We live under a scheme of things which contains many features that are different from what we should expect them to be. The one fact of the presence of evil in the world throws out many of our calculations; and perhaps it ought to throw out more than we suppose.

I have the greatest reluctance, even upon what seem to be obvious propositions of morality, to lay down laws for the Almighty. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" is no doubt an axiom that stands absolutely fast. But it is another thing to say that we shall always be able to see what is right. The lines meet no doubt some-

where, but that meeting-point may be beyond our ken. It is well for us that it should be so. It is well that we should walk sometimes by faith and not by sight. It is well that we should feel that we are

Moving about in worlds not realized.

I shall have occasion perhaps more than once to fall back upon this principle. But the necessity does not trouble me. It is one of those for which I am antecedently prepared.

I can go with Dr. Moberly when he says that "remission of penalty must have a justification" (p. 51); but not if he means, as he seems to mean, a visible tangible definable justification. He seems to me to pursue this idea to the point of making forgiveness cease to be forgiveness in the sense that I should attach to the word. I must needs associate myself with his own admirable statement of the objection to his view, the substance of which was already in my mind before I reached it.

But when we venture to give to the word forgiveness any meaning of this character at all, we are met, no doubt, by one or two very real difficulties of thought. Thus the question suggests itself, if forgiveness (with whatever provisoes) is made to be simply correlative to forgiveableness; and if to say that a man is forgiveable means not merely that he may be, but therefore *ipso facto* that he ought to be, nay, must be forgiven: if forgiveness, that is, is a sort of automatic and necessary consequence of a certain condition of the culprit's personality; are you not exactly taking out of forgiveness all that it ever had distinctively meant? Are you not precisely and completely explaining it away? When you say you forgive, you are merely recognising the growth towards righteousness of those who are already becoming righteous. You may call it forgiving only those who deserve to be forgiven. Is it really more than this, that you acknowledge the goodness of the good; or, at all events, the imperfect goodness of the incompletely good! You merely do not continue to condemn those who no longer ought to be condemned? So far as they are still wicked, you refuse to forgive them. So far as they are becoming righteous, they do not need any act of yours to forgive them. In other words, there is no place left for forgiveness. Either, in accordance with truth, you still condemn, or

else, in accordance with truth, you acquit and accept. Where does forgiveness come in? Justice this may be. But has not forgiveness, as forgiveness, dropped out altogether? Either there is nothing that can be called forgiveness at all; or, if there is, it is a forgiveness which can be said to have been, by deserving, "earned": and is not forgiveness that is earned exactly not forgiveness? (p. 58 f.)

I waive the point to which Dr. Moberly demurs about "earning" and "desert." I gladly acknowledge that later in the book (e.g. pp. 319 f., 321 f.; cf. 139 f.) he repeatedly lays stress upon the fact that the preparation for forgiveness is not the work of the sinner himself. But I do not think that he ever adequately answers the objection that forgiveness as he defines it is neither what is commonly meant by the word nor what is often meant by it in the Bible. It seems to me also that forgiveness is not the only word that does not come by its due. "Mercy" I should be inclined to say was another, and other words of the like kind.

Take for instance some familiar lines of Shakespeare's—

Whereto serves mercy,
But to confront the visage of offence?
And what's in prayer, but this twofold force—
To be forestalled ere we come to fall,
Or pardoned, being down?

And again—

But mercy is above this sceptre'd sway,
It is enthroned in the heart of kings;
It is an attribute to God Himself:
And earthly power doth then show likest God's
When mercy seasons justice.

I do not doubt that in such contexts as these Shakespeare as usual speaks for the popular mind. I do not doubt that in the myriads of cases in which "mercy" and "forgiveness" are ascribed to God the great mass of mankind understand by them simple remission of penalty, without regard to the cause of the remission.

And I should have equally little hesitation in asserting that there are numbers of places in which the Bible, New Testament as well as Old, does the same thing. The very word "forgiveness," I imagine, has this meaning. I should not be surprised if it were maintained that the word *πάρεσις* means something provisional or conditional. But that is just what I conceive distinguishes it from its synonym *ἄφεσις*. And if we seek for explicit statements, what can be more explicit than Romans iii. 24: "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (*δικαιούμενοι δωρεάν τῇ αὐτοῦ χάριτι, διὰ τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ*), where the Greek is even more significant than the English? To reconcile this with Dr. Moberly's view should we not have to blot out *δωρεάν* altogether and to take away half its meaning from *τῇ αὐτοῦ χάριτι*? I appeal to this passage as perhaps the one most directly in point, though there are many others that seem with different degrees of directness to imply the same thing. Such would be (e.g.) Ephesians ii. 4-6; Titus iii. 4-5; Romans v. 6-11; Matthew xviii. 23-35 (the Unmerciful Servant); Luke xv. 1-7, 8-10.

I do not deny that some of these passages, especially those from Ephesians and Titus, do not stop at the moment of forgiveness, do not leave the sinner at the point where he is "dead in trespasses," but go on to speak in the one case of quickening or raising up with Christ, and in the other of the renewing of the Holy Ghost. I do not deny that we may also, if we please, take up the position that the Divine forgiveness always has in view these further stages of the Christian life. But it seems to me that if we follow the tenor of Scriptural teaching simply, without letting ourselves be disturbed and diverted by considerations from without, we shall see (i.) that the Christian life does consist of a series of successive stages; and (ii.) that the Scripture does not hesitate to speak of the initial stage

by itself and without reference to the later stages. I conceive that most of the places where St. Paul uses the verb "to justify" or "be justified" (*δικαιοῦν, δικαιούσθαι*) are of this sort. I cannot quite go with Dr. Moberly's note on this word (p. 335 f.). I believe that in all these places it has strictly the sense that belongs to it in common usage, and that this, and no other, entirely suits the contexts.

I think therefore that much of our popular theology—the theology of street preachers and evangelists—has really a great amount of Scriptural support behind it when it lays stress upon a "free forgiveness." I do not think that it is wrong in the order in which it presents its message—Forgiveness first, and love and obedience flowing from forgiveness. Not that this is the only order or that the links in the chain can be ever really separated, but that this is distinctly an order in which the Scripture itself presents the sequence, and that it has been found in practice to possess a great power of attraction.

For, further, it seems to me that this order appeals to an instinct that is really planted deep down in our nature. There are different types of forgiveness. That on which Dr. Moberly insists might be called the "parental," or "pædagogic" type. And if it is contended that that is the type most nearly analogous to Divine forgiveness, I should have nothing to say to the contrary. But the human heart is instinctively drawn to another form of forgiveness that has in it (as we should say) no *arrière pensée*, no element of calculation, but which is simply the pure outflowing of love; ignoring misdeeds, forgetting the past, and simply going forth to meet and embrace the offending and alienated friend. A love such as this asks no questions and makes no conditions. It is not thinking either of conditions or of consequences. The rush of its own inner strength carries it forward. If it is rebuffed, it takes its rebuff meekly. It sinks back perhaps bruised and wounded but in no way

repenting of its venture. And if it succeeds the success is glorious—just the kind of success to make the very angels in heaven rejoice.

Are we to think that there is nothing corresponding to this, with whatever unseen and unimagined modifications, in God? Is it only a product of human short-sightedness and imperfection? If we are obliged to say that it is, would not that mean that one of the purest and most disinterested feelings in man had no counterpart above itself? Should we not at last have found something which the Great King Himself may not enjoy though His subjects may? And would not that one thing be, no counterfeit, but the real distilled essence of forgiveness?

IV.

The next great issue that separates me from Dr. Moberly, without doubt a greater than the last, on which I know that I have made and feel that I ought to make so many concessions, that the difference between us (except just on the point of the paragraphs immediately preceding this) might be regarded as almost formal; the next, and not only greater but really greatest issue, is as to whether the atoning death of Christ can be described as in any sense a "transaction." Here again, and here most profoundly, I am aware that my friend has on his side an immense weight of cultured and highly trained opinion. I cannot be sorry that he should speak to so large a public in tones that it will recognize as its own. The only thing for which I confess that I am a little sorry is that in speaking of the "transactional" theory he should have thought it necessary to set it in the pillory, not only in its extreme forms but in a travesty even of them. I have in mind more particularly a sentence on p. 342, which recalls to me rather by way of contrast another sentence on p. xi. of the Preface as to certain "inferential structures"—it is the

same structures that are intended—"the most untrue of which has considerable relation to truth." *Abusus non tollit usum*. Nobody in these days believes in the more monstrous developments of the past. To denounce them is like slaying the slain. We do not need these awful examples. If we were not ourselves sensitive enough in regard to them, outside opinion would warn us off such ground. It is an altogether happier function to seek out the grain of truth that lies hid within the error, to set that in just proportion.

It is of course also a misfortune that we should have to use these terms "transaction," "transactional," which carry with them in the context a shade of meaning that is naturally repellent. It is not really this side that we wish to put forward. What we mean is that among the mysteries that surround the Atonement (and no one is more conscious of these than Dr. Moberly) there is one great field of mystery, with which we ourselves are only concerned through its effects and which we cannot explain but must not explain away.

Our reasons for believing in the existence of this particular field of mystery are partly because we think that it is revealed, partly because the assumption that it does exist seems to us to supply a key to many things in the history of the race which we could not understand without it; partly also because by the application of the historical method it appears that the antecedents of apostolic thought would naturally point in this direction.

I remarked some way back on the rather curious fact that the dedication of Dr. Moberly's book, which in a manner summarizes the leading thought of the whole, does not contain a single one of the terms that some of us are most in the habit of associating with the Atonement. It will seem to these that his treatment of the Scriptural basis of the doctrine is strangely unequal. Some of the passages

involved have the fullest possible justice done to them. They are set in a new light and are brought home to the mind in a very striking manner. But others which appear to be hardly less relevant are either not introduced at all or introduced only in a brief section in smaller print that comes in parenthetically in the last Supplementary Chapter on the “Atonement in History.” In this section there is a rapid survey, which is no doubt very pertinent, of a number of New Testament passages bearing upon the doctrine.

Of course every writer must follow his own bent and treat his subject in the way that is most natural to him. It is no valid criticism that others would have treated it differently. Still the fact remains that we have stowed away in this small corner what for many of us would have had a place in the main thesis of the book; and I cannot help thinking that these parts of the subject are really minimized.

It may be true that the variety of the metaphors used in Scripture goes to show that none of them can be pressed to their full logical extent. But so many of these converge upon the one idea of sacrifice that it seems as though we were obliged to accept this idea as quite central and essential to the whole conception of Atonement.

Now, far be it from me to say that Dr. Moberly does not recognize this aspect of the Atonement as a sacrifice; but he seems to me to throw quite into the background certain features which in the writings of St. Paul and St. Peter and St. John and the Epistle to the Hebrews are not in the background, but prominent and even central.

One group of terms in particular to which I cannot find that justice is done is the group that we translate by “propitiate,” “propitiation” (*ἱλάσκεσθαι, ἱλαστήριον, ἱλασμός*). Neither word occurs at all in the index; there is only an incidental reference to the group on p. 334.

Another group of the same kind is that which includes

"blood-shedding," "sprinkling of the blood," and the phrase "in the blood"; the underlying principle of which is laid down in Hebrews ix. 22, "Apart from shedding of blood there is no remission."

I am well aware that modern thought has a short and easy method with all these terms. If it is compelled to give an account of them it sets them down as relics of primitive barbarism. But more often it simply ignores them and goes on its way without them.

Dr. Moberly does not altogether do this, but he comes rather near doing it. Sacrifice is with him the expression of certain moral ideas, and he tries to treat it as though its significance were exhausted by those ideas.

I need hardly say that I sympathize with the effort, which is the better side of the movement of thought that we see around us. But those of us who start, not from any philosophical or theological system but in the first instance from the Bible, cannot wholly satisfy themselves with this method. It may be an open question, as it is no doubt a further question, how the Biblical teaching is related to their own ultimate personal beliefs. But before they come to that point they must resolutely make up their minds not at any cost to tamper with the facts as they see them. Whether they like or dislike, whether they understand or do not understand, their duty is the same. Neither ignorance nor knowledge, neither sympathies nor antipathies, neither the attractiveness of one theory nor their repugnance to another, not even the highest or purest of moral instincts and aspirations, must be allowed to divert them from the straight path. They are like Balaam before Balak, and what is put into their mouths that they must say, with all its chances of its being wrong, with all its risks of being misunderstood, with all their consciousness that it is but seeing "through a glass darkly."

Those then for whom I am speaking must directly face

the fact that these terms—"propitiation," "bloodshedding" and the like—have the prominence they have. It is quite another thing to say that they understand them. They are awful words. And when we try to penetrate into their meaning we soon find that we have to bow the head and be silent.

But so much at least seems to follow from them, that the Scriptures do recognize a mysterious something which, in our imperfect human language, may be described as a "transaction." It seems to me difficult for the plain reader of his Bible to deny this.

But, when we have got so far, abashed and silent as we may be, there seem to open out long vistas which at least give to the history of the human race and to the course of God's providential dealings with men a unity that they would not have otherwise.

1. A new light is thrown on what I have said that modern thought would dismiss as "primitive barbarism." This contemptuous estimate is in fact utterly superficial, and not less unscientific, in any true sense of science. Surely the doctrine of Evolution has taught us not to make light of humble beginnings. The first beginnings of sacrifice may be humble and the ideas associated with it may be crude; but we cannot stop short at these. The eye must needs follow it down the ages until it reaches its culmination on Calvary. If we take what I conceive to be the Biblical view of Calvary then we have a true evolution with a true culmination. The course of things becomes intelligible where before it was not. At least we see that the dim half-conscious gropings of the human mind far back in the past had a diviner goal than we might have supposed.

2. Another subject on which the propitiatory aspect of the Atonement appears to throw light is the value of Vicarious Suffering.

We may join with Dr. Moberly and the moderns in rejecting the idea of Vicarious Punishment, except in so far as this means pain incurred in the necessary working out of the consequences of sin. But whatever we may say as to Vicarious Punishment we must not lose our hold on Vicarious Suffering. On Dr. Moberly's theory the form which this takes is mainly as penitence. And perhaps it is true that vicarious penitence, His utter identification at once with the judgment of God upon sin and with the heartfelt contrition that man ought to feel but cannot adequately feel for it, was the most poignant of all the pangs of the Divine Sufferer on Calvary. But here again we have a climax, and our thought must include all the pain and all the humiliation that He underwent in taking upon Himself the nature of man.

It is just in regard to this vicarious suffering that the Old Testament comes in to reinforce the New. No other sacred book has anything like it. And here once more the great example does not stand alone, but is reached through a number of delicately drawn concentric circles of which it is the centre. The Bible is the most consoling book in the world just because it reveals to us the extreme beauty and value of that untold mass of suffering endured for the sake of others which seems at first sight the greatest flaw upon God's creation. We see at last that this form of suffering belongs fitly to such a world as that in which we live—not to a world serene, untroubled and always in sunshine, certainly not to a lotus-eating existence, to a world that has its sad minor chords, but yet to a world in which

We feel that we are greater than we know.

A world like this can have no other centre than Calvary.

3. When we look at the Biblical writers historically we see that the elements of this particular conception of the Atonement were already in their minds. They not only

inherited the great sacrificial system of the Old Testament, and they not only had before them the profound teaching of the latter part of Isaiah respecting the Servant of Jehovah with the parallel teaching of certain Psalms—Scriptures which took the deepest hold of the first generation of Christians—but in addition to this they in all probability had distinct ideas, if not exactly as to Vicarious Suffering (which was a subject developed in the Talmudical theology somewhat late and under the influence of Christianity), yet at least as to vicarious merit. Some of these ideas needed to be purified and they were purified; but we can see how they helped to supply material out of which the Christian doctrine was constructed. I am afraid that I cannot recall any contemporary teaching that would in like manner suggest Dr. Moberly's theory of vicarious penitence.

V.

We now come to the philosophical question which has caused Dr. Moberly to combine together in his title "Atonement" and "Personality." In regard to this I desire to keep an open mind, but I must confess to a good deal of hesitation.

Dr. Moberly's point is that Personality, when analysed, is found to consist of Will, Reason and Love. But in our present state each of these is necessarily imperfect; they only reach their perfection through the indwelling Spirit of God. Dr. Moberly goes so far as to say that this indwelling Spirit actually constitutes the renewed and regenerated self.

I think that he guards himself sufficiently against Pantheism, though I could rather wish that he had stated the distinction as explicitly as he has done in the case of Sabellianism earlier in the book. The self is not, as I understand him, merged and lost, but only comes to

respond perfectly to the Will of God. His view appears to be modelled more especially on two passages in the Epistles of St. Paul. One is 2 Corinthians xii. 2-5: "I know a man in Christ, fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I know not; or whether out of the body, I know not: God knoweth,) such a one caught up even to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or apart from the body, I know not: God knoweth,) how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. On behalf of such a one will I glory; but on mine own behalf I will not glory, save in my weaknesses." On this we have the following remarks—

Of whom is St. Paul speaking? There is one before his thought whom he sharply contrasts with himself—*ἑπὲρ δὲ ἑμαυτοῦ οὐ*. Who is it? Who is the "self" of whom he will not glory and who is the "such a one" of whom he will? Are they not both—with whatever difference—himself?

Even then the veteran apostle and martyr, who, in vision, by anticipation, had himself seen and tested the truer reality of himself, yet means by "himself," in the present, the imperfect self, the self characterized by weaknesses within and distresses without, and chastened by the "thorn in the flesh," the messenger of Satan to buffet him.

As the clear vision of his transfigured self does not prevent his self-identification meanwhile with the weakness and distress; so does not his true self-identification with the weakness and distress obscure the truth that the transfigured being whom, having once felt, he cannot but contrast with himself, yet is, to say the least, something very far nearer than he is to the true and ultimate reality of himself (p. 320 note).

The other passage is Galatians ii. 20. Of this Dr. Moberly writes—

If any one desires a Christian formula for the central conception of human personality, it may be gathered from the words of St. Paul, "I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live; and yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me." I yet not I, not I, and therefore I, the full, real, consummated "I" at last. Here is the real inmost principle of life and immortality brought to light by the gospel of Christ (p. 255).

The first passage brings out the continuity of the two selves; the second brings out the identity of the renewed self with Christ.

It will thus be seen that Dr. Moberly has full Biblical support for his theory. And the two passages that have been given are only samples of a number of others. It must be confessed that this is a strong point in its favour.

My hesitation comes in rather from the side of philosophy. I cannot feel sure of the sufficiency of the analysis which resolves the "person" into will, reason and love. I desiderate something more—the bond to hold them together. I cannot find that I can do without the "distinct centre of being." If I interrogate my own consciousness this seems to me the prime fact to which it testifies.

It is no doubt true that this "centre of being" cannot be wholly isolated from its surroundings. It feeds so to speak upon these surroundings, just as the body takes in from without the food that keeps it alive. But as in the body there must be the organs to assimilate the food, so in the self there must be something central to correlate and unify the impressions from without. This constitutes the empirical self, the self of experience—the imperfect self if you will—but there must needs be a centre somewhere to maintain the continuity between the different phases.

This is as far as I can see at present. I am still disposed to try whether the formula of "influence," which I have hitherto been in the habit of using in these cases, will not best satisfy all the conditions. The influence may be the very closest and most penetrating conceivable; but I am compelled as yet to think of it rather as influence than as absorption or substitution. It seems to me that for this too there is Biblical warrant; e.g. St. John xiv. 23: "If a man love Me, he will keep My word: and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him"; and Revelation iii. 20: "Behold, I stand at

the door and knock : if any man hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with Me." In such passages the reciprocity between the human self and the Divine Presence is fully maintained. As at present advised I should be disposed to explain the other passages in the light of these. By so doing we can keep in closer touch with mother earth and those realities of which we have the most immediate cognizance.

VI.

If I am, in conclusion, to try to form an estimate of the book as a whole, my first feeling must be one of regret that it should be unfortunate in its reviewer. Great as it undoubtedly is, and great as he feels it to be, it yet collides with too many of his own cherished ideas for him to be able to do it complete justice. It is true that the accessories alone are so replete with interest and instruction that, even if there was nothing in the main argument with which he could agree, he would still have a book that he could prize most highly. But there is of course much more than that. Even a reviewer whose mind is somewhat pre-occupied cannot help being impressed by the elevated character of the whole conception. It is, as was hinted at the outset, a really heroic attempt to construct a far-reaching theodicy of a large part of God's ways ; and it is an attempt that has all the inner marks of success that belong to a singularly well articulated and well compacted structure.

As the eye travels backwards over the course of English theology in search of a work of the same kind (i.e. in the department of philosophical theology) and of equal magnitude it seems to find nothing to stop at until it comes to Butler's *Analogy*. But then this book stands to the *Analogy* not so much in the relation of a supplement or development as of an alternative. The *Analogy* is based

upon a profound sense of the mystery of things, but the mystery is evenly distributed. Whichever way the mind looks it is met by mystery, and the resultant attitude is like that of the Psalmist when he says, "I refrain my soul and keep it low."

But with Dr. Moberly's book the case is different. There the mystery recedes to an unexpected degree from a part, and yet only from a part, of God's ways. One section of them as it were is thrown into bright light, the effect of which however is but to increase the surrounding shade.

And in relation to the Scriptures the effect seems to be similar. It is one of the strong points of the book, and a point by which I am duly impressed, that it gives the fullest possible force to certain of the Apostolic and even of the Evangelic utterances. But then there are others of which this cannot be said. Rather, the theory by its negations seems to stand in the way of adequate justice being done to them.

These negations indeed are not peculiar, they are common to much of the more advanced thought of our time. We who cannot share them are yet very far from grudging the help that is given to those who can. We are only compelled reluctantly to keep to old paths as best we may.

W. SANDAY.

HISTORICAL COMMENTARY ON THE EPISTLES TO THE CORINTHIANS.

XLV. THE APOSTOLATE.¹

NOWHERE does Paul state in clearer terms his views about the authority vested in an Apostle, and about the origin of that office, than in the chapter which we now approach. His own authority in Corinth was questioned, and he

¹ In the previous article, p. 234, read § XLIV. in place of XLII.