

Vulg. *expolians*) maintains the general splendour of the picture, but misses the striking effect of the detail. For modern readers, however, unacquainted with antiquity, “spoiled” or “despoiled” may still be the more forcible. It may be desirable to add, in confirmation (if need be) of the reference of the triumph to *God the Father*, that it is to the “mighty working” of *the Father* that S. Paul elsewhere ascribes the resurrection and glorification of Christ at His right hand, thus, notwithstanding the crucifixion and death, “despoiling the powers and triumphing over them in Him,” i.e. in Christ.

I have ventured to select the above out of many examples, and dwell at some length upon them, under a deep sense of their importance, doctrinally and otherwise. On the many minor inaccuracies which, I am sorry to believe, disfigure almost every page of the R.V., I have neither space nor wish here to dwell. The A.V., it is true, also has its blemishes and imperfections, but they fade almost into insignificance in comparison with the serious errors of the Revised. The Version of James’ translation is more true to the genius of the English language, and characterized in more directions than one by more profound scholarship. Until both Text and Translation be made much more perfect, it involves much less wrong and much less loss to the churches to retain the old Version.

J. B. McCLELLAN.

### CONSCIENCE AND CREED.

(1) THAT a man himself is as he thinks of God, is a truth on which stress has often been laid by the theological teacher, to whom I gratefully acknowledge my deepest debt—Principal Fairbairn. That a man thinks of God as he himself is, is its companion truth, which must not be for-

gotten or neglected. Browning, in his poem "Caliban on Setebos," presents that truth in a striking, if grotesque, form. Religion shapes morality, but is itself moulded in turn. A man's creed may enlighten or darken his conscience, but his conscience too may make or mar his creed. If morality be the realization by man of his ideal, and if religion be man's assurance that his ideal has reality in God, then it becomes clear that the human ideal and the divine reality must in the mind of man sink or soar together. That religious superstition brings moral corruption Paul in his terrible indictment of the heathenism of his own world and age has shown; but he had been anticipated by Plato, who in his ideal state found it necessary to forbid much of the popular mythology in the education of the citizens on account of its pernicious moral influence; and by Lucretius, who denounced the great evils to which religion persuaded mankind. The philosopher and the poet alike illustrate the revolt of conscience against creed, which has been a characteristic feature of human progress in many lands and times. For man's consciousness of God and his conscience of duty have not always grown together, and religion has often been conservative while morality has been progressive. Even in the history of the Christian Church has this protest of conscience against creed again and again been repeated, and there has been, after much conflict, as a result of this protest, a transformation of theological ideas in accordance with ethical principles. It would be interesting and instructive to follow throughout the course of the history of the Christian Church—the mutual action and reaction of these two factors in its life and work—Conscience and Creed; but I cannot here make any such attempt. My purpose in dealing with this theme will be sufficiently served, if I can illustrate and interpret the influence of ethics on theology in recent times, in the present phase of our Christian religion and morality. For

what after all concerns and interests us most of all is the atmosphere, mental, moral, and spiritual, which we ourselves are breathing, in which we live, and move, and have our being.

(2) May I venture before entering on the subject proper to refer to the fact, that Christian ethics is slowly winning recognition in theological studies and literature, as itself an illustration of this influence of conscience on creed? In spite of the prominence of ethics in the teaching of Jesus and His apostles, the Christian Church has hitherto paid much more attention to dogmatics, the definition of the objects of faith, than to Christian ethics, the exposition of the ideal of life; there is far less literature, which has become classical, on Christian duty than on Christian doctrine; the scientific study of Christian morality as such is of comparatively recent date; there still are theological colleges in Britain where no instruction in this science is provided; in the requirements for some theological degrees it is not included at all, in others it is still only an alternative and not a necessary, subject. But a wiser and better view is surely, if slowly, gaining ground. In the pulpit more attention is being given to the moral demands of the Christian faith; in the press the discussion of the application of the ethical principles of Jesus to social problems grows apace; the colleges are awakening to discover that they have been neglecting something which essentially belongs to the thorough furnishing of the man of God for every good work; it is no vain prophecy that in the future Christian ethics will be studied as carefully and thoroughly, as its companion discipline, Christian dogmatics, has been in the past. That this change is altogether for good who can doubt? The world around is making with ever greater urgency this demand on the Christian Church. Show thy faith by thy works, prove divine grace in human duty, make clear and sure the

efficacy and sufficiency of the Christian salvation by the solution of the Social Problem. Nay, because too often the demand is not fully and promptly met, the world is casting at the Christian Church the taunt, that its boast to possess the divine secret for enlightening, quickening, cleansing, and renewing human life is vain, and that its moral impotence shows its religious unreality. We have no right to refuse this challenge, or to resent this provocation. This is no other than the test which Christ Himself proposed, that the tree is known by its fruits. The present conditions offer to the Christian Church its great opportunity, and lay upon it its great obligation to show itself possessed of a divine enthusiasm and a divine energy for the redemption of the whole manhood of all mankind. But this enthusiasm must be controlled, and this energy must be directed by a divine enlightenment. Zeal and strength need the guidance of knowledge. Never was the study of Christian ethics more of a practical necessity in the Christian Church than at the present day, and the growing recognition of the importance of this subject is a cheering sign that we are beginning to discover, not only how great our need of this guidance is, but also how best it may be met. In the teaching, example, and Spirit of Jesus Christ we may find our marching orders for the crusade to which we are being called by the loud cries of the many and varied evils of the age as well as by the quiet inward voice of the Captain of our salvation in our own consciences. We may, therefore, heartily welcome as a sign of the triumph of the ethical spirit in the Church this growing interest in, and attention to, the scientific study of the distinctively Christian morality.

(3) That during the century just closed, Christian theology passed through what can without exaggeration be described as a revolution, I need not now pause to prove. Compare any characteristic theological work of the

eighteenth century with one of the nineteenth, and you will find not only a change of verbal phrase, but even of mental mode. The scientific attitude, the philosophical tendency, the critical spirit, the historical method of the one century were so different from all the intellectual conditions of the other, that it was inevitable that theology, which cannot be kept in mental isolation, but must be affected by its mental environment, should pass through a far-reaching change, which not a few sincere and earnest Christians dread and deplore, while others rejoice in, and welcome it. There can be no question that there are current tendencies in theological thought, which are nothing else, or less than, a deadly danger to Christian faith. The historical method, when pushed to the extreme of a denial of the supernatural in the Christian facts, is a fatal menace to the Christian life. The scientific mind, which can think only in the categories of matter and motion, is in irreconcilable antagonism to the Christian spirit. The Rational Press Association Reprints of books of such tendency at the low price of sixpence, which has secured for them a circulation of many thousands, and has carried this anti-Christian thought into the homes of the common people, are an ominous sign of the times, a challenge to the Christian Church to protect and preserve the essential contents of its creed, while ready to meet difficulty and relieve doubt by all necessary and legitimate modifications of its intellectual forms. For on the other hand there are current tendencies in theological thought which are not alien to the Christian faith, but are its inevitable intellectual expression under the existing conditions. If modern science in its principles, methods, and results has been one of the most potent factors in bringing about this alteration of doctrine, if modern criticism has introduced a new standpoint in dealing with the Scriptures, yet it is no less true that the ethical spirit of the age has been beneficently at work in leading us to

think otherwise about God and man, and their relation, than our fathers did. It should reconcile us to some of the new views, if it can be shown that these are due, if not entirely, yet mainly, to the influence of conscience on creed, that they seek to restore the disturbed harmony of morality and religion, that their claim as truth rests on their worth as righteousness. There are two ways in which ethics can affect theology. It may demand that the supreme object of faith and worship shall correspond with the absolute ideal of duty and good; that is, that man shall believe that God possesses perfectly all those moral excellencies which man seeks to attain progressively, that man shall refuse to assign to God any defect which he would be ashamed of in himself. Secondly, it may demand that the relation between man and God recognized shall include the obligations of, and the inducement to, the duties which he acknowledges as binding in his relations to his fellow-men; in other words, that as God is the ultimate, sovereign, all-inclusive, all-regulative reality, all man's other relations shall be duly recognized in this relation to God. Adopting and adapting the words of the Hebrew prophet, ethics demands of theology that doing justly and loving mercy shall be inseparable from walking humbly with God. Ethics claims that theology shall be true to the apostolic statement, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness; and that they who walk in His light shall have no fellowship with the unprofitable works of darkness.

(4) On each of these considerations it seems necessary to dwell for a few moments in order to give to them their due emphasis. The first of them has not been as fully recognized by Christian theologians as it should have been. Under cover of the assertion of the inscrutable mystery of the works and ways of God, purposes and practices have been assigned to Him which in men would have been condemned as immoral. Dean Mansel, for instance, denied the

right of reason on moral grounds to criticize revelation, and maintained that God might subject man to moral laws, by which He did not feel Himself bound. That profane position, however, has met with the contempt which it deserved. Most theologians would now admit that our moral ideal must have reality in God, if it is to claim realization in us. Just as to the scientific agnosticism of Spencer, who argues that as the inscrutable reality may be more than personal, we have no right to assign personality to it, Christian thought must reply that God must be at least personal, whatever more He may be, as personality is our highest conceivable category, so to this theological agnosticism of Mansel, that we cannot apply to God our moral standards, it must reply, that we must conceive God as at least as moral as man knows that he himself should be. Just because God is infinitely better than even our ideals, must we believe that He is as good as, and cannot be less good than, man. The elevation, purification, and expansion of man's conscience for himself must, therefore, be accompanied by a corresponding transformation in his consciousness of God, if there is not to be in his inmost life that rift within the lute which makes its music mute. Much of the spiritual unrest of this age is due to the felt discord between moral and religious convictions. When this first demand of ethics on theology, that God shall be conceived as the absolute moral perfection has been met, the legitimacy of the second must be recognized. Morality must not be regarded as existing alongside of religion in a friendly alliance with it, but must be acknowledged as an essential element in it. If the moral ideal be reality in God, then its realization in man must belong organically, vitally, to the relation of God and man. God cannot desire or require from man anything inconsistent with, or even unrelated to, the human imitation of the divine perfection. In many heathen religions it is true religion and morality

are divorced, but this is one of their most glaring defects. The Hebrew prophets denounced the separation of ritual from righteousness in the popular religion of their own land. Christ and His apostles said much about moral duty, little about religious worship; they were interested in moral principles, indifferent to religious rites. Nevertheless the Christian Church during many centuries lapsed to the standpoint of heathenism, and the popular Hebrew religion, and offered God sacrifice instead of showing man mercy. The Protestant movement was a moral reformation as well as a religious revival, because it restored the duties of common life to their right place as parts of divine service. In Protestant Churches, however, orthodoxy has sometimes been unduly valued, and morality insufficiently appreciated. Around us we see churches attaching more importance to sacraments than to justice and charity. So ineradicable seems to be this tendency to substitute ritual ordinances for righteous performances, that it is as necessary now as ever to insist that goodness is what the Infinite and Eternal Goodness wants as man's acceptable sacrifice and reasonable service.

(5) Having thus defined the two directions in which the influence of conscience on creed is to be sought, we may now consider some illustrations which recent theology offers. The antithesis between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism has sometimes been formulated thus, that the supreme authority for the one is the Church, and for the other the Bible. It is true that it has been maintained of late by many Protestants that the Bible claims our reverence only as it leads us to Christ, and that He alone claims the submission of our minds to His divine truth. But, even if this should prove a position acceptable to Protestants generally, the change in the conception and estimate of the Bible which it involves cannot but be regarded as one of the most significant revolutions in

modern thought, to which we must first of all direct our attention in order to discover whether and how far the ethical spirit of the age must be regarded as one of the factors in bringing it about. I do deeply deplore the rash conjectures and the vain speculations about the Bible to which the *Encyclopædia Biblica*, so inconsistently with what such a publication should be, has given wide-spread currency, because it brings into suspicion and contempt the whole critical movement, which, in its sober and serious representatives, has a claim, not only to the tolerance, but even to the gratitude, of the Christian Church. I do not claim to be an expert in these matters, but as a student of theology deeply interested in the wider issues for Christian thought of this modern scholarship, I have been led to the conclusion that this critical position has so far established itself, that theology must frankly and fully reckon with it. In this connexion Professor George Adam Smith has used an unfortunate phrase; he speaks of fixing the indemnity; to me it would seem more fit and just to say, that we may now calculate the dividend; for I am persuaded that the Holy Scriptures, studied according to these modern methods, gain not only in literary value and historical significance, but that theological thought itself is relieved of burdens it bore formerly, and is enriched with treasures that it had not hitherto gained. Especially from the ethical standpoint is there gain and not loss in the critical results. The moral difficulties of the Old Testament, a favourite topic with secularist and agnostic lecturers and writers, such as Abraham's attempted sacrifice of Isaac, Jephtha's actual sacrifice of his daughter, Jael's treacherous murder of Sisera, the extermination of the Canaanites, Samuel's hewing Agag to pieces, the immoralities and cruelties of David, Elijah's slaughter of the priests of Baal, cannot be dealt with from the traditional standpoint without producing moral confusion; but the recognition of a

gradual progress in divine revelation, conditioned at each stage by a slow moral and religious human development, makes the task of the Christian apologist much easier. When we are set at liberty to believe that God neither commanded nor approved what our conscience compels us to condemn, but only caused His light to shine ever more brightly amid much darkness in men, then our faith is relieved of a painful strain, and a stumbling-block is removed from the path to truth for those who are still seekers. The literary and historical arguments, the strength of which I admit, are for me reinforced by the ethical significance and value in removing such moral difficulties of this modern view of this slow growth of the divine light, life, and love in human history.

(6) I go a step further, and affirm that this conception of progress in revelation is one which commends itself to an enlightened conscience. The moral life in the individual as in society is a gradual development; there are no leaps and bounds in conscience and character, but only a going on step by step. Moral ideas inspire moral efforts, and moral efforts prepare for moral ideas of loftier reach, which in turn result in moral efforts of larger range. The reason for this gradual development is that only that has moral worth which is moral gain; moral good cannot be given, but must be won; conscience can be enlightened only as character is formed. If revelation be conceived as a divine communication, which is not conditioned by the conscience and character of the recipient, and is not adapted to the stage of development of those for whom it is intended, it loses its moral meaning and worth. But if it is conceived as a progressive illumination of the mind by God, dependent on a gradual submission of the life to God, then it is ethically conceived. For men still growing towards perfection, and bounded by their imperfection, a revelation ideally defective is really effective from this moral stand-

point. As the modern critical view of the formation of the Bible recognizes this necessary moral condition in the progress of revelation, it may be pronounced a more truly ethical view than the traditional is. But, further, the critical view brings into prominence, as the traditional had not, the contribution to man's ethical thought which the Hebrew revelation has brought. We owe it to the higher critics that the prophets live for our intelligence and imagination, sympathy and reverence, as they never did for any previous generation. Writings that were mysterious have become luminous. The ethical spirit is in the prophets in clearest sincerity and strongest intensity. That God demands righteousness in all social relations and national policies is the message which these men delivered to their own age, and which their writings are imparting still. If criticism has in any way weakened the external attestations of the Old Testament revelation, miracle and prediction, although it has not at all to the extent commonly believed, it has greatly strengthened the internal evidence in the exposition which it has made possible of the moral mission of the prophets. As for this modern standpoint Christ has become the luminous centre of the New Testament, from which divine illumination radiates to the whole, so the prophets are the focus of the divine light which falls on Hebrew history. Before leaving this subject let me remove a possible misconception. I do not believe that the critical position involves, as some of its advocates and many of its opponents maintain, that the progress of revelation can be regarded as a natural evolution. Neither does the ethical standpoint with which I have tried to show that the critical position is in accord involve, that the distinctive action of God, which we describe as supernatural, was absent. Neither criticism nor ethics is under any necessity of, or derives any advantage from, a denial of the fact of the divine activity; but the mode in which criticism

enables us to conceive this divine action, as a gracious adaptation of God's gifts and claims to man's needs and powers appears to me as more significant and valuable ethically. Accordingly the ethical spirit has nothing to condemn, all to commend, in this view of the Bible, which relieves moral difficulties, exhibits a moral development of unique worth, and accords decisive importance to the moral teaching of the prophets.

(7) There can be little doubt, that the doctrine of verbal inspiration of the Scriptures helped to perpetuate ideas about God, long after they were felt to be morally objectionable. The scruples of conscience were stifled, as it seemed impious to question what was written; or recourse was sought to the view already condemned that the same moral standards were not applicable to God as to man. Candour compels us to admit that the traditional theory of inspiration often led men to do violence to their reason and conscience alike by constraining them to accept conceptions neither intelligible nor credible. The more adequate conception which we now possess both of the method and the purpose of revelation breaks these fetters on human thought about God, and allows conscience and reason their full right. We dare now to believe that nothing unworthy of ideal humanity can be ascribed to the divine reality. We can now hold with Tennyson, in his poem "Rizpah," that the heart's purest and deepest affections are our surest clue to the mystery of the works and ways of God. The doctrines of the damnation of unbaptized infants, of the foreordination of some men to perdition, of the condemnation of the heathen who have not heard the gospel, of eternal punishment in gross physical form,—all of which are an offence to conscience,—have been allowed to fall out of the actual working creed of most Christian churches. When the father's might was the right of the home, when teachers flogged learning into their scholars, it was easy to believe

in a God whose authority was arbitrary, and whose decrees were inscrutable. But as our manners and morals have become more humane, it has become impossible to enthrone tyranny in heaven. There are some persons who think that we should be the better of recovering the Puritan idea of God. But while we may long for their spirit of courage and constancy, we may be content to let their theology alone. I have no ambition to believe with Baxter, "that as the damned souls shall from hell see the saints' happiness, to increase their torments; so shall the blessed from heaven behold the wickeds' misery, to the increase of their own joy." The revelation of God's Fatherhood, for many generations obscured and distorted, is at last coming to be understood and accepted, and is becoming the regulative principle of theology. The ethical spirit has not only made this great advance in understanding the mind of Christ possible, but even inevitable. It is no less a demand of conscience that the Fatherhood of God shall be conceived as essentially a moral relation. A divine fatherhood which is a universal good-nature, indifferent to, and ignoring, moral distinctions among men is not an ethical conception. As unmoral it can only breed moral confusion and laxity. God cannot be for conscience other or less than just, righteous, holy; His absolute perfection must prescribe the conditions, and determine the limits, of His benevolence and beneficence. The maintenance, and extension, and advancement of Godlike life, that is the purpose which determines the method of the divine Fatherhood. The serious and strenuous ethical spirit forbids no less the flabby softness and the cloying sweetness of some modern representations of the love of God than the harsh severity of some of the traditional doctrines. In the truth of the *Holy Fatherhood* of God conscience demands that not less justice shall be done to the adjective than to the substantive.

(8) It is through the Son that we know the Father, and, therefore, the doctrine of the person of Christ is no less important for Christian theology than the doctrine of the nature of God. The doctrine of the divinity of Jesus has been much under debate in recent years. The Christian Church cannot accept the denial of that doctrine without the sacrifice of its inmost life. But there are certain modifications of the ecclesiastical dogmas, which not only the evangelical testimony and the apostolic interpretation demand, but which are necessary in order to exhibit the moral significance and value of the Incarnation. That the humanity of the Son of God was real, if also typical and ideal, that He subjected Himself to the conditions and limitations of man's life on earth, that He was in some matters ignorant and liable to temptation, that His development, mental, moral, spiritual, was no semblance—the recognition of these facts ethics demands. If He were omniscient, He could not be tempted; and, if He could not be tempted, His victory over sin would be morally sham and seeming. If He were not truly and fully man, sharing our burden, waging our battle enduring our darkness, we could assign no meaning, no worth to His becoming sin and a curse for us, to His tasting death for every man. An ethical conception of His salvation demands that He should be fully and truly identified with the race He came to save by a common moral history. Again I must repeat that moral good must be freely gained, and accordingly man's Saviour must Himself have been tempted in all points even as we are, yet without sin. The Christology, which lays stress on the true humanity of Jesus has a moral motive and purpose, and, therefore, has abundant moral justification. For the moral ideal can be realized for us and in us only by a personality which possesses the essential attribute of moral life, freedom to gain the good by doing the duty. But it may be objected, that to this moral demand

we are sacrificing a religious interest, that we must believe that our salvation is from and by God. But this affirmation of the true humanity does not deny the very divinity of Christ, but only serves to enrich and enlarge our conception of God. If the Incarnation, not as a physical process, as sacramentarians are fond of representing it, but as a personal experience and development, from its beginning to its close, expresses the self-sacrifice of God, divine limitation and humiliation, then it becomes the truest and best evidence of the moral perfection of God as love so holy that to save it suffers. That this doctrine, that the very divinity is manifested in the true humanity of Jesus, presents intellectual difficulties I do not deny; but that these difficulties are such as to forbid an honest and candid belief in the Incarnation cannot be maintained. Such a faith has a moral significance as well as a religious value. To conscience God cannot be more worthily presented than, as in His only begotten and well beloved Son, love incarnate even unto self-sacrifice. The sublimest and profoundest moral ideal is the Cross. How much the Incarnation means for our view of God Browning has taught us in the words—

The very God! think, Abib; dost thou think?  
So, the All-Great, were the All-Loving too—  
So, through the thunder comes a human voice  
Saying, "O heart I made, a heart beats here!  
"Face, my hands fashioned, see it in myself!  
"Thou hast no power nor may'st conceive of mine,  
"But love I gave thee, with myself to love,  
"And thou must love me who have died for thee!"

(9) In dealing with Christ's person there could not be excluded some reference to His work, for His vocation was not, as with most men, relatively accidental, but absolutely essential to His person. If we now look more closely at the doctrine of the atonement, we can in the changes of thought most of us remember trace the influence of this

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potent moral factor in theology. All analogies drawn from human law-courts have gradually been recognized as morally inadequate, if not objectionable. That Christ was condemned and punished instead of us that we might go free simply on believing that He had done and suffered this for us, this is a theory of the atonement which the conscience of many men will not allow them to accept. And we must believe that they are more truly saved by Christ's grace who refuse to stifle their conscientious scruples than they who to get peace and comfort silence the inward voice. It is a genuinely ethical criticism of the traditional orthodoxy, which has made some representations of the Atonement, which the good and godly fathers held without any difficulty, impossible to their not wicked and godless sons. It must be insisted that there is a conservative evangelicalism which needlessly gives moral offence, and that there is a progressive evangelicalism which seeks to satisfy moral demands. Just because I care so much for evangelicalism, just because the Cross is the centre of my Christian thought and life, do I so deeply deplore that evangelicalism has so often made the Cross a difficulty instead of a deliverance for conscience. I do not, and I cannot believe, that we must remain without a doctrine of the Atonement, or must acquiesce in the superficial theory that the Cross has only a manward aspect, and that its efficacy is exhausted in its subjective effects, in its moral and religious impressiveness; that it is a tragic spectacle addressed to human emotions. The ethical spirit itself, which has led so many to reject the older explanations, must bring us to a more adequate interpretation than this. God's relation to man as personal must be moral. His moral authority on the one hand must be recognized, as well as man's moral submission on the other hand must be secured. While we reject analogies drawn from human law-courts, we cannot avoid the recognition of the truth, that man's

relation to God is not accidental or arbitrary, but is subject to the inexorable, ineluctable law of the Divine perfection. God's moral authority, to deserve the respect which it demands, must be shown as an absolute condemnation of, and a final execution of sentence on sin. Man's disobedience does and cannot but produce a moral reaction in God, which in punishing the violation of law reasserts His moral authority. If this be necessarily the universal and permanent moral order, in subjection to and in accordance with which man can alone realize his moral destiny, we have a moral right, nay, even a moral duty, to expect that, even in the manifestation of God's grace unto the forgiveness of sins, that moral order will not only be maintained, but will be manifested more surely and clearly than it is among the confusions of individual experience and universal history. Sin itself must be crucified, its absolute condemnation must be pronounced, and its final sentence be executed by God. With all my mind and soul I believe that God has done this in the sacrifice of His Son, which brings us salvation. On moral grounds alone we are compelled to seek a theory of the Atonement which will not less, but more adequately than all discarded theories show that God is righteous in reckoning righteous the ungodly.

(10) The doctrine of justifying faith, the human response to the Divine appeal in the Cross, must be as ethical as the doctrine of the Atonement itself. That does not mean that we are to abandon the evangelical position, and lapse to the legal; that we are to turn from faith to works. Perish even such a thought! But evangelicalism must learn to conceive faith as essentially and entirely ethical. There has been great progress in this direction. Faith is coming to be more and more generally regarded as not merely assent to a plan of salvation, but as confidence in and submission to a Saving Person. It is a misfortune that this conception of faith has often been described as *mystical* in

contrast with the older view as *legal* and *forensic*. For there is nothing more obscure and mysterious in this than in any other personal relation. There is the mental illumination and the moral influence of a perfect divine affection, progressively received and responded to in a human devotion. There is a transformation of character and conduct as a result of personal communion with a perfect personality. Love brings likeness, and affection must yield affinity for the Perfect. The life in Christ, thus conceived as a personal relation of progressive human persons to the perfect divine-human person of Jesus Christ, is ethical in method as in purpose. We do not need to abandon the firm, sure ground of the ethical, and launch out on the trackless sea of the mystical, in defining saving faith as fellowship with the living Saviour. Only if faith, as a personal union with the Perfect, carries the promise and the power of perfection, can it justify its high claims to conscience. For the grace of God, by which the faith of man is nourished, fostered, developed, is the only efficient and sufficient energy for the moral trial and task to which every Christian man is called. Conscience has been awakened to acknowledge in the present day wider responsibilities and heavier obligations than in any former age. Civic, national, nay, even universal righteousness is what the moral ideal of the present day demands. Why are the slums a shame and a sorrow to us, why do we dread the menace of the liquor trade, why did many hesitate to approve, and some not shrink from condemning the recent war? why did the massacres of Armenia, why do the atrocities of Macedonia bring a horror of great darkness over our souls? Because not only have we hearts to feel for and with our brothers and sisters, but also we have consciences, which tell us that these things need not and ought not to be. That they shall not be—this is the demand of conscience, that they shall not be—this too is the

response of Christian faith, which, claiming, enjoying, using the grace of God in Christ, is more and more seriously and bravely accepting the burden and the battle of a life in and for Christ, which, saved from sin and death, surrenders itself to be the means He may use to save all, that where sin reigned abundantly unto death, grace through righteousness may reign more abundantly unto eternal life. Thus is Christian theology in its recent progress coming to conceive more ethically the whole Christian salvation from its roots in the heart of God to its fruits in the life of man, and thus too is it becoming more practical. The present position is full of promise of a closer communion with, a clearer vision of, and a higher and wider obedience unto God in Jesus Christ, and this gain has been in large measure due to the influence of Conscience on Creed.

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*THE LIFE OF CHRIST ACCORDING TO  
ST. MARK.<sup>1</sup>*

XXIX. THE TRANSFIGURATION, IX. 2-13.

THE episode of the Transfiguration is connected by St. Mark with the previous incidents as part of the crisis which was the prologue to the Passion. After six days Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John, and took them by themselves to a high hill, probably by night, possibly moonlit, or illumined by flashes of lightning. We are not told where this hill was ; six days, or more, had elapsed since Peter's confession, and had probably been spent in journeying ; neither is it clear that the incidents which

<sup>1</sup> These studies do not profess to be an adequate historical and doctrinal account of Christ, but are an attempt to set forth the impression which St. Mark's narrative would make on a reader who had no other source of information, and was not acquainted with Christian dogmatics.