

SIN AS A PROBLEM OF TO-DAY.

II.

SIN AS MORAL TRANSGRESSION—THE PRIMARY  
CERTAINTIES.

A FIRST aspect in which sin appears to the natural conscience, likewise in Scripture, is as *transgression of moral law*. "Every one that doeth sin," says St. John, "doeth also lawlessness (*ἀνομία*), and sin is lawlessness."<sup>1</sup> "Sin," says St. Paul, "is not imputed where there is no law."<sup>2</sup> Hence the common description of sin as "transgression" (*παράβασις*)—"Where there is no law, neither is there transgression"<sup>3</sup>—"trespass" (*παράπτωμα*),<sup>4</sup> "stumbling,"<sup>5</sup> "going astray."<sup>6</sup> The generic name for sin, *ἁμαρτία*, a missing of the mark, points in the same direction, with special glance at the moral end (cf. Rom. iii. 23).<sup>7</sup>

It was observed in the previous paper that "law," in the Christian sense, cannot be divorced from the idea of God, as, in Lotze's phrase, the "Highest Good Personal." But man, as made in the rational and moral image of God, recognises law in his own conscience: even the heathen, as St. Paul says, "not having the law, are the law unto themselves, their conscience bearing witness therewith, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing them."<sup>8</sup>

On this subject certain preliminary remarks fall to be made. The question will then have to be faced—Is not

<sup>1</sup> 1 John iii. 4.    <sup>2</sup> Rom. v. 13.    <sup>3</sup> Rom. iv. 15; cf. Jas. ii. 9, 11.

<sup>4</sup> Rom. v. 15, 17, etc.    <sup>5</sup> Jas. ii. 10; iii. 2.

<sup>6</sup> Isa. liii. 6; Jer. l. 6; 2 Pet. ii. 15, etc.

<sup>7</sup> The chief Old Testament terms corresponding to the above are well represented in Ps. xxxii. 1, 2, 5 (cf. Exod. xxxiv. 7)—*עָוָוָה*, transgression; *חָטָא*, coming short of the mark; *פְּשָׁעָה*, a perversion, a misdeed, iniquity.

<sup>8</sup> Rom. ii. 14, 15.

modern thought in open conflict with the Christian conceptions of moral law, and of man's obligations under it? It may sound strangely to some that such a question should need to be raised, but no one familiar with the literature of the day will doubt that the need is not only there, but is urgent.

On the positive or Christian side, the following positions will probably command general assent :—

1. Moral law implies, as its necessary correlate, the *moral being*. From its nature, the conception of the "ought"—in which morality may be said to centre—can only arise in a rational agent, capable of setting before himself ends, and of contemplating alternatives, distinguished in moral quality, either of which, in the exercise of choice, he can adopt. As elements in the constitution of the moral agent may therefore be recognised—(1) Capability of moral *knowledge*—perception of moral distinctions, of right and wrong, good and evil, with recognition of the *obligation* which the perception of the right imposes on the will; (2) Capacity of moral *affections* and *emotions* (approval and disapproval, etc.); (3) Possession of a measure of *self-determining freedom*. It is not, however, simply in the sphere of conduct (action) that obligation is realised. Even more fundamentally, certain qualities of character are recognised as good or evil—as having moral value.<sup>1</sup> Moral law prescribes to the agent at once what he ought to *be*, and what he ought to *do*; and sin arises from shortcoming or disobedience in either respect.

2. A second consideration is that, as respects content,

<sup>1</sup> Hence the distinction that may be noted in ethical schools—some preferring to speak of moral *law* (e.g., Kant), others of moral *values* (Lotze, Ritschl); some dwelling on the rectitude (conformity to rule) of *actions*, others on the beauty or amiability of virtuous *character*—the "jural" and "aesthetic" standpoints respectively, as they may be called. The moral "ought" includes both the ought to *be* as well as the ought to *do*.

moral law has the implication of *absolute moral values*. While law has relation to God as its Source and Upholder, this in no wise means that it does not embody the idea of an essential right and wrong. God does not create moral values. He Himself is the absolutely Perfect One,<sup>1</sup> in whom the Good has its eternal ground. What God wills is not, as Occam thought, good because He wills it, but He wills it because it is good. This idea of a right and wrong which neither God nor man can make or unmake—which the enlightened conscience is capable of discerning when presented to it—lies at the foundation of a true Christian ethics, and of every Christian view of sin. It is an idea not disproved by anything that can be urged on the gradual growth of moral conceptions, or the aberrations of undisciplined or low-grade minds—a subject to be dealt with afterwards.<sup>2</sup> It is the higher here that must judge the lower, not the lower the higher. The ordinary conscience will confirm the assertion that good and evil are not terms that can be changed at will: that even God could not, e.g., set up falsehood, and treachery, and cruelty, on the throne of the universe, and say, These are the virtues to be extolled and worshipped; or cast down love, and purity, and justice, and say, These are vices to be abhorred and spurned.<sup>3</sup> There is, as Carlyle would say, an everlasting “Yea” which affirms itself in goodness: it is Mephistopheles who boasts: “I am the spirit that evermore denies.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Matt. v. 48; Mark x. 18: “None is good save One, even God.”

<sup>2</sup> See the valuable remarks in Dr. Rashdall's *Philosophy and Religion*, pp. 63 pp.

<sup>3</sup> David Hume's singular contention: “If nature had so pleased, love might have had the same effect as hatred, and hatred as love. I see no contradiction in supposing a desire of producing misery annexed to love, and of happiness to hatred” (*Dissertation of Passions*, Works, II. p. 112), is fitly paralleled by the suggestion approved by Mr. J. S. Mill of a conceivable world in which two and two make five! (*Exam. of Hamilton*, p. 69).

<sup>4</sup> “Ich bin der Geist der stets verneint” (Goethe, *Faust*).

Good and evil are thus, in their essential nature, opposites. This does not imply that, in the moral relations in which human beings stand to one another and to God, there may not be *positive* commands as well—injunctions, “statutes,” which it is wrong, in relation to God, sin, to disobey. Such, in certain of their aspects, are civil and political laws. Such are the commands which a parent may and must impose upon his children for the direction of their conduct, in their studies, and in other ways. In the economies of religion there is a stage when the “children,” as minors, are under “rudiments.”<sup>1</sup> Still such commands are presumed to be not arbitrary, but to rest upon a moral basis, and to subserve a moral end.<sup>2</sup> If they contravene the higher—written or “unwritten”<sup>3</sup>—law of true morality, they do not bind the conscience. “We must obey God rather than man.”<sup>4</sup>

3. It is still further to be remarked that, when moral law is spoken of in this connexion with sin, the word “law” is to be taken with all the *spirituality* and *depth* of meaning which Christ’s revelation imparts to it. Only thus is it the *Christian* conception. The law in the natural conscience is much; as developed and illumined by centuries of *Christian* training, is more. The law in the Old Testament is more still. With all its Jewish limitations, how high does it rise, in its insistence on righteousness, above the standard of ordinary *Christian* aspiration and attainment even at the present hour! How changed a spectacle, e.g., would society present, if only the Jewish Ten Commandments were honestly and universally obeyed among men! “Thy com-

<sup>1</sup> Gal. iv. 3.

<sup>2</sup> It is a singular merit of Calvin that he perceived so clearly the relatively subordinate position of the ceremonial and political laws of the Jews to the Ten Commandments, in which lay the real bond of their covenant with God. (See his Preface to *Com. on the Last Four Books of Moses.*)

<sup>3</sup> “The unwritten, yet unchangeable laws of the gods.” (ἄγραπτα καθάλη θεῶν νόμινα), Sophocles, *Antigone*, 454-7).

<sup>4</sup> Acts iv. 29; cf. iv. 19.

mandment is exceeding broad," said the Psalmist.<sup>1</sup> St. Paul, speaking from experience, declared : " The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and righteous, and good." <sup>2</sup> It is customary to speak slightly of the Decalogue—the " Ten Words." " Ten Words " truly ! But look at these " Words " as they are set in the revelation of God's character and grace in the history ; regard them no longer as isolated precepts, but trace them back, as they are traced in the law,<sup>3</sup> and by Christ,<sup>4</sup> to their central principle in love, to God and to one's neighbour ; view them as they dilate and expand, and flash in ever-changing lights, in the practical expositions and applications made of them ; learn, as St. Paul did, that the law they embody is not a thing of the letter, but of the spirit, touching every thought in the mind, every word spoken, every action performed—penetrating into motive and regulating affection<sup>5</sup>—and the estimate we form of their breadth and depth may become very different. It is in Christ, however, the Perfect Revealer of the spirituality of the law, and at the same time the Personal Embodiment of its holiness, that we come supremely to comprehend how vast and wide, how profound, how searching, the commandment of God is. " I am not come," said Jesus, " to destroy, but to fulfil." <sup>6</sup> The commandment is " old," but it is also " new," for it has become " true " (realised) in Him and in His people.<sup>7</sup>

These are the positions on the Christian side. What now is to be said of the conflict of modern thought with these Christian ideas ? For conflict, strong and uncompromising, there unquestionably is.

We come back here to the crucial issue—Is this whole conception of a moral law, resting on absolute moral values,

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxix. 96.      <sup>2</sup> Rom. vii. 12.      <sup>3</sup> Deut. vi. 5 ; Lev. xix. 18.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xxii. 37-40 ; Mark xii. 29-31.      <sup>5</sup> Rom. vii. 7-13.

<sup>6</sup> Matt. v. 17.      <sup>7</sup> 1 John ii. 7, 8.

on which so much is made to depend, a *valid* one? Is it not a conception disproved, left behind, rendered even ludicrously obsolete, by a sounder—a more truly scientific and philosophical—investigation of the nature and genesis of moral ideas, their connexion with the past in organic and social evolution, their relations and changing character in different races, ages, and environments? Suppose, e.g., the theistic basis of the moral law to be subverted, and the ethical character of the Power manifested in the universe to be denied. Suppose, next, the doctrine of “relativity” to be introduced into moral conceptions, and the absoluteness of moral distinctions to be negated. Suppose, again, that human morality is conceived of as a slow development from non-moral animal instincts and impulses, or is explained as a phase of social convention, changeable in the future, as it has often been changed in the past—if, indeed, it is not the express vocation of the true reformer radically to change it (Nietzsche). Suppose the idea of obligation traced to the action of natural causes (e.g., fear of punishment) which weaken or destroy its binding hold on conscience; while conscience itself is analysed, as it is by Schopenhauer—an extreme case, but hardly too extreme for our age—into such elements as “one-fifth fear of man, one-fifth superstition, one-fifth prejudice, one-fifth vanity, one-fifth custom.”<sup>1</sup> Suppose, yet again, with so many moderns, that free-will is eliminated as an illusion, and a rigorous Determinism reigns in its stead. What, in such a situation, becomes of our moral law, with its supposed sacredness, and unconditional demands? It has vanished, and with it, in current discussions, moral conceptions and traditions are thrown into the melting-pot, there to undergo transformation into one does not well know what.

<sup>1</sup> *Die beiden Grundprobleme der Ethik* (1st Edit.), p. 196 (quoted by Calderwood).

Is this description exaggerated? We should not like it to appear so. It truly, as will be shown, represents a deliberate and important trend in the responsible thinking of our age; and though nobler philosophies, and able defences from many sides, are in the field, these are often themselves weakened by a defective theistic basis, or by an element of compromise with naturalistic theories, which largely neutralise their value for an effective vindication of the Christian doctrine of sin.

Let a few of the chief points be regarded more closely.

1. The question of *Theism*, and of the divine *Holiness*, in relation to the fact of sin, is reserved for special consideration in a succeeding paper. It cannot, however, but impress a thoughtful mind how entirely the postulate of a living, holy God has disappeared from current ethical discussions, and how inadequate, where not positively subversive of a sound morality, are the conceptions substituted for it in the name of science and philosophy. One has not in view here a crude Monism—indistinguishable from a materialistic Pantheism—like that of the Jena *savant*, Haeckel, though a very perceptible current from this is found in the popular thinking and writing of the time. Mr. Spencer's agnostic absolutism, also, based on an untenable doctrine of the "unconditioned," borrowed from Hamilton and Mansel, has well-nigh passed its day of influence, or has become merged in the yet more radical absolutism of Mr. Bradley.<sup>1</sup> The elevated idealism of the Oxford Hegelians has, through stress of an inner logic, moved largely in the same direction.<sup>2</sup> The result has been that the idea of the personal God—even of Mr. Green's "Eternal Self-Conscious-

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Rashdall (*Phil. and Religion*, p. 52) reproduces Mr. Bradley's epigram that Mr. Herbert Spencer has told us more about the Unknowable than the rashest of theologians has ever ventured to tell us about God.

<sup>2</sup> Cf., e.g., the criticisms in A. E. Taylor's *Problem of Conduct*, chap. ii.; A. J. Balfour's *Foundations of Belief*, pt. ii. chap. ii.

ness"—is largely surrendered, and, instead, we have an Absolute—the Ground or Reality of the universe—for which good and evil, in the ordinary sense of the terms, no longer exist.

Only one or two examples need be taken, as Dr. Ellis McTaggart's recent works are a carefully-reasoned argument against the admissibility of the idea of a God in any form. "I have endeavoured to show that all finite selves are eternal, and that the Absolute is not a self."<sup>1</sup> "If the results which I have reached . . . are valid, it would seem that we have no reason to believe in the existence of a god."<sup>2</sup> It is argued that the conception is not needed either for the explanation of the world, or for human happiness.<sup>3</sup> Mr. Bradley goes deeper. For him moral distinctions disappear altogether in the abyss of the Absolute. There is but one Reality, and its being consists in experience.<sup>4</sup> Morality and religion both fall within the sphere of "appearance," and have no absolute truth. To the Absolute there is nothing either good or bad.<sup>5</sup> "Ugliness, error, and evil are all owned by, and all contribute to, the wealth of the Absolute."<sup>6</sup> "'Heaven's design,' if we may speak so, can realise itself as effectively in 'Cataline or Borgias' as in the scrupulous or innocent."<sup>7</sup> Religion, which rests on a relation of man to a God conceived of as personal, is also a self-contradictory idea.<sup>8</sup> "But if so, what, I may be asked, is the result in practice? That, I reply at once, is not my business."<sup>9</sup> Similar to this is the position in Mr. J. E. Taylor's work, *The Problem of Conduct*, which combines with Mr. Bradley's teaching elements from Nietzsche's

<sup>1</sup> *Studies in Hegelian Cosmology*, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Some Dogmas of Religion*, p. 261.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, chaps. vii., viii.    <sup>4</sup> *Appearance and Reality*, p. 454.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.    <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 489.    <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 202.    <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 446-8.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 450.

doctrine of the "Superman."<sup>1</sup> The closing chapter of the book, imitating Nietzsche, is entitled, "Beyond Good and Bad,"<sup>2</sup> in what sense will immediately be seen. As another example of this phase of the *Zeit-Geist*, it will be enough to allude to Mr. Karl Pearson's *Ethic of Free Thought*. "Religion" to this writer, "is law."<sup>3</sup> "Hence the indifference of the true free-thinker to the question of the existence or non-existence of a personal god. . . . To repeat Buddha's words, 'Trouble yourselves not about the gods. If, like the frogs or the Jews, who would have a king, we insist on having a god, then let us call the universe, with its great system of unchangeable law, god—even as Spinoza.'"<sup>4</sup>

It should be noted that, in the view of all these writers, as of a crowd of others, no ground is left for belief in immortality<sup>5</sup>—of which more anon.

2. The one effective answer to these subversions of the ethical character of the Supreme is in the certainty of the moral *Ideal*, which, with its unchanging values, points, as already said, to a Source beyond the finite consciousness. It has rightly been esteemed Kant's outstanding merit to have emphasised the unconditional character of the moral "imperative"—the "Thou shalt" of duty; as it was Butler's to have exalted the distinctive "authority" of conscience. But the moral ideal also, no less than the

<sup>1</sup> "This was the great and imperishable service of Nietzsche to ethical philosophy. However far we may be from recognising in Nietzsche's rather unamiable heroes our own ideal human being, we may at least say that ethics seems to have said the last word in the command to live for the 'Overman'" (*Prob. of Conduct*, p. 410).

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Taylor would seem since to have somewhat modified his position. To compare the above really "antinomian" view (cf. p. 480) with St. Paul's doctrine of justification by faith (pp. 432-6, 479), is absurd.

<sup>3</sup> *Ethic of Free Thought*, p. 27.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

<sup>5</sup> Dr. McTaggart, while rejecting all ordinary arguments for immortality, holds, as above quoted, that "all finite selves are eternal." This, however, has nothing to do with personal immortality in the usual sense. It is rather endless re-incarnation without memory of former existence (cf. *Heg. Cos.*, pp. 52-4; *Dogmas of Religion*, p. 128).

God who is its eternal Ground, is, with the accompanying conceptions of obligation, authority, good and evil desert, brought into question by the all-challenging spirit of the time.

It can, indeed, be argued, as it is by Dr. McTaggart, that a high moral ideal may exist without belief in God to sustain it,<sup>1</sup> just as a high standard of personal conduct may be maintained in association with naturalistic or other theories which logically would destroy their foundations.<sup>2</sup> Sooner or later, however, theories of this kind may be relied on to work out their natural consequences, and history shows that it is the most perilous of experiments to tamper with moral sanctities, and expect no evil fruits to result. Hence the earnestness with which religion has generally contended against associational, utilitarian, hedonistic, and evolutionary theories of morals, in which no *a priori* (rational, intuitive) principles of judgment were recognised, and has insisted on the universal and unchanging authority of moral law. After all, one is warranted in contending, the right is not simply the expedient; the good is not simply the pleasurable; conduct which springs from the compulsion of fear is distinguishable from conduct voluntarily done from the obligation of duty. Where there is not the recognition of primary<sup>3</sup> and naturally-binding obligations such as are found in all codes, many of them the oldest, worthy of the name—one may refer to the Egyptian Precepts of

<sup>1</sup> *Dogmas of Religion*, pp. 280-4. Cf. the remarks of Martensen, *Christian Ethics*, pp. 15-17 (E.T.).

<sup>2</sup> Mr. A. J. Balfour justly says: "I am not contending that sentiments of the kind referred to may not be, and are not frequently, entertained by persons of all shades of philosophical or theological opinion. My point is, that in the case of those holding the naturalistic creed the sentiments and the creed are antagonistic; and that the more clearly the creed is grasped, the more thoroughly the intellect is saturated with its essential teaching, the more certain are the sentiments thus violently and unnaturally associated with it to languish or to die" (*Found. of Belief*, 8th Edit., p. 18). Cf. Sorley's *Ethics of Naturalism*.

Ptahhotep (5th Dynasty), the Negative Confession in the Book of the Dead, the Code of Hammurabi, Confucian and Buddhist ethics—morality properly cannot be said to exist. The savage, and not he alone, may seem to be indifferent to lying and theft—to have no sense of wrong in connexion with them—but let his neighbour try to deceive or defraud *him*, or behave to him with selfish ingratitude, how speedily does moral condemnation flash out! <sup>1</sup> The untutored mind may not be able to comprehend abstract canons like Kant's or Hegel's, "Respect humanity in your own person," "Be a person, and respect others as persons,"—canons self-evident to those who understand them,—but the reason which expresses itself in such formulas is already working in the obligation the individual spontaneously feels to be self-respecting, controlled, veracious, honourable to comrades, faithful to promises and trusts. Doubtless he may know, and not obey, with the result of darkening of mind and weakening of will <sup>2</sup>; his judgments also may often be mistaken and perverted, partly from moral causes, partly from undeveloped intelligence, partly from ignorance and error in regard to himself, his world, and his relationships; but as he gains the right standpoint, grows in knowledge of his environment, and acquires the will to obey, conscience likewise grows in clearness, in vigour, in power of discrimination.

It is precisely these exceptions, entering, we must hold, into the essence of morality, from which much in our modern thought *removes the ground*. It will be generally granted that this was the effect of many of the older selfish and sensational

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Rom. ii. 1: "Wherefore thou art without excuse, O man, who-soever thou art that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest dost practise the same things." Savage tribes have, as Mr. A. Lang shows in his *Making of Religion and Magic and Religion*, often much higher moral notions than sociologists are wont to ascribe to them. Above all, they have the moral *capacity*.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Rom. i. 21 ff.

theories of morals—even of a utilitarian hedonism, unmodified, as J. S. Mill sought to modify it, by the introduction of the idea of “ quality ” in pleasures.<sup>1</sup> To declare, e.g., with Hobbes, that man is a naturally selfish being, and that rights spring from the sovereign power in the State, defining the limits within which selfishness shall be allowed to operate, is, apart from untruth to the facts, an *immoral* exaltation of absolutism, and ignoring of the demand that even public rights shall rest on a basis of inherent justice. To say, again, with Bentham, that morality is a simple calculation of pleasures and pains (the moralist is an “ arithmetician ”<sup>2</sup>), and that the word “ ought ” is one which should be banished from human speech,<sup>3</sup> is to abandon the possibility of a science of duties,<sup>4</sup> while professing to construct one.

Modern thinkers, however, because they dig deeper, remove the foundations only the more effectually. Dr. McTaggart strikes a high note in finding the goal of existence in “ love ”; but how shall he justify the demand for a “ passionate, all-absorbing, all-consuming love,”<sup>5</sup> in a universe the Principle of which neither loves nor can be loved,<sup>6</sup> in which Determinism rules,<sup>7</sup> and in which there is no personal (conscious) immortality? When, besides, love is described as knowing that another “ conforms to my highest stan-

<sup>1</sup> A criticism of these theories is given by the present writer in his *David Hume: His Influence on Philosophy and Theology*, chap. ix (“ The World’s Epoch-makers ”).

<sup>2</sup> *Deontology*, ii., Intro., p. 19.

<sup>3</sup> “ If the use of the word be admissible at all, it ‘ ought ’ to be banished from the vocabulary of morals ” (*Ibid.*, i. p. 32). Yet Bentham himself frequently uses it.

<sup>4</sup> “ It is, in fact, very idle to talk about duties; the word itself has in it something disagreeable and repulsive ” (*Ibid.*, p. 10).

<sup>5</sup> *Heg. Cosmol.*, p. 261.

<sup>6</sup> The Gospel command is: “ Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,” etc. (Mark xii. 29). But on this theory love to God is excluded. “ That, of course, must go, if it is believed that the person that was loved never existed ” (*Dogmas of Religion*, p. 290; cf. *Heg. Cosmol.*, pp. 288–90).

<sup>7</sup> See below.

dards," and feeling that "through him the end of my own life is realised,"<sup>1</sup> is not this a recognition of values and ends of which, again, no good account is given? The ethical outcome of Mr. Bradley's theory of the absolute has already been indicated; and Mr. Taylor, in his Nietzschean vein, is, if possible, even more sweeping in his conclusions. One passage from the chapter, "Beyond Good and Bad," may indicate the standpoint. "As we advanced toward the final culmination of morality in practical religion we saw the notions of 'guilt,' 'desert,' 'obligation,' and 'free-will,' which ordinary ethics assumes as fundamental, lose both scientific meaning and practical validity. And even the life of practical religion, we have learned, though it dispenses with so many of the uncritical assumptions of mere morality, needs as its basis the assumption for practical purposes of a standpoint which metaphysical criticism must finally reject as self-contradictory and unintelligible."<sup>2</sup>

3. The ethical conceptions, however, are still there, and demand *explanation*; and such explanation, as already hinted, neither naturalism, nor the metaphysical idealism we have been considering, is able to give. "Self-realisation" is ethical only if the self that is realised has the ethical ideal already implicit in it: "self-satisfaction" is but a subtler form of hedonism; "the advantage of society" yields no help, unless society reckons among its highest advantages the possession of excellencies of character, which is to move in a circle. Mr. Taylor is in the peculiar position here of starting with an empirical psychology, and ending with a metaphysical absolutism akin to Mr. Bradley's. Unlike

<sup>1</sup> *Heg. Cosmol.*, p. 261. There are hints, however, that even this is not the ultimate. The conception of virtue, we are told, "reveals its own imperfection [as implying the possibility of sin, of action, of time], and must be transcended and absorbed before we can reach either the absolutely real or the absolutely good" (p. 128; cf. *Dogmas of Religion*, p. 138).

<sup>2</sup> *Prob. of Conduct*, p. 493.

Dr. McTaggart, however, who lays all the stress on eternal personal "selves," Mr. Taylor will not allow to the "self" any proper existence at all; it is a "secondary product" of "the ordinary psychological laws of recognition, assimilation and association"<sup>1</sup> (all of which, in truth, already imply the "self"). It is a natural corollary that there are "no unconditional obligations,"<sup>2</sup> and that the ordinary ethical concepts—obligation, duty, responsibility, free personality—are derivatives from non-ethical roots.<sup>3</sup> The crucial test of such a theory is the account it has to give of such concepts as "obligation," "responsibility," "accountability,"<sup>4</sup> and one has only to watch carefully to perceive that the "genesis" of such ideas on empirical lines can only be effected by surreptitiously introducing into the process, as the argument proceeds, the very ideas it is intended to explain. That others expect or require something from me, and can enforce their demand by punishment, does not suffice to create the feeling of obligation;<sup>5</sup> in order to this the demand must be felt to be a *right* one—to have reason and justice in it.<sup>6</sup> In any case, Mr. Taylor is precluded from furnishing a satisfactory explanation of the notion by his denial (1) of a real personal identity, and (2) of freedom—both essential conditions of a consciousness of accountability.<sup>7</sup>

4. It is striking that it is precisely the three ideas which Kant held to be essential to morality—God, Freedom, Immor-

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 78-9. A yet more thorough-going denial of a permanent self may be seen in the newly-published work on *Consciousness*, by Dr. H. R. Marshall. The conclusion logically drawn is that "the notion of erring and sinning is an illusion" (p. 657).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.      <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 119 ff.

<sup>4</sup> The most searching analysis of this group of notions is perhaps that in Mr. Bradley's earlier work, *Ethical Studies*, Essay I.

<sup>5</sup> *Prob. of Conduct*, p. 140.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Bradley, *Ethical Studies*, p. 3. Man must feel that "it is *right* that he should be subject to the moral tribunal; or the moral tribunal has a *right* over him, to call him before it, with reference to all or any of his deeds."

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 5, 7.

tality—which our modern theorists seem most bent on overthrowing. It might seem clear that there can be no moral conduct in the proper sense—that is, conduct for which the agent can justly be held responsible—unless such agent possesses at least a measure of self-determining *Freedom*; and that a thoroughgoing Determinism of the kind advocated in most recent scientific and philosophical works would (if mankind could be got to believe in it, and to act on it, which they never do) be destructive of the very idea of responsibility. To affirm this is not to be blind to the very genuine speculative difficulties involved in the idea of freedom, or to the fallacies in many popular discussions of it. Freedom is not absolute, but is hedged round with many conditions; it is not lawless, but has laws congruous with its own nature. The so-called “liberty of indifference” is an irrationality as incompatible with true freedom as Determinism itself.<sup>1</sup> For every choice a man makes there is at the moment a “why” or “reason,” which leads him to choose as he does rather than otherwise. But that a man guides himself by rational and moral considerations, or *ought* to guide himself by these (for he may yield to influences which override his freedom, and rob him of it),<sup>2</sup> does not alter the fact that his action in the truest sense proceeds from *himself*—is due to his own self-determination. It is not enough even to say that his *character* decides him. Character is itself largely the product of antecedent acts of freedom, so that the question is only shifted back. After the most searching analysis there will probably always be felt to be

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Bradley, as above, pp. 8 ff. Erdmann is quoted as saying: “The doctrine of Determinism is a will which *wills* nothing—which lacks the form of will; the doctrine of Indeterminism a will which *wills nothing*, a will with no content” (p. 11). On the rival conceptions of necessity and freedom see Emerson’s Essays on “Fate” and “Power” in his *Conduct of Life*.

<sup>2</sup> From the Christian standpoint, man’s will is in a *spiritual* bondage, through sin, from which only God’s grace can deliver it (cf. Rom. vii.).

a residuary unanalysable element in freedom.<sup>1</sup> But nothing will eradicate the plain man's conviction that his responsibility is bound up with a power of determining himself in a way which makes his acts truly his own.

To the metaphysical, as to the scientific mind, however, there is a fascination in the idea of universal causation—of unbroken law—which almost resistlessly compels it to the rejection of free-will, and the adoption of a *Determinism* as rigorous as that of physical nature. It is not only "miracle" that the modern philosopher rejects, but that *simulacrum* of the miraculous in man—free-agency. Professor W. James is an exception,<sup>2</sup> but he allows that the other view is the prevailing one. Materialistic and Pantheistic systems (Spinoza, Haeckel) are of necessity deterministic.<sup>3</sup> H. Spencer was Determinist. So are most recent philosophical writers.<sup>4</sup> Karl Pearson, e.g., for whom the universe is a logical thought-process, advocates "Free-thought" by preaching absolute Necessity. "Every finite thing in [the universe] is what it is, because *that* is the only possible way in which it could be."<sup>5</sup> Mr. Bradley does not directly discuss the question in his later work, but the implications of his system—the non-reality of self and change, the illusoriness of time, Reality, eternal and unchanging, only in the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Galloway, *Principles of Religious Development*, pp. 327 ff.

<sup>2</sup> See his Essay on "The Dilemma of Determinism" in his *Will to Believe* (pp. 145 ff.). The so-called "Pragmatist" school inclines in this direction (cf. Schiller on "Freedom" in *Studies in Humanism*).

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Blatchford's opinions are of no account philosophically, but it may be noted that he is a determinist of the extremist type, and denies responsibility. "I do seriously mean that no man is under any circumstances to be blamed for anything he may say or do" (*God and My Neighbour*, p. 10; cf. his chapter on "Determinism."

<sup>4</sup> One wonders more at finding it in a theologian like A. Sabatier. See the Preface to his *Esquisse d'une Philosophie de la Religion*. "There has never been met with in history a being who was not anteriorly determined" (p. x).

<sup>5</sup> *Ethic of Free Thought*, p. 29.

Absolute<sup>1</sup>—destroy freedom in its very idea. Dr. McTaggart argues elaborately for “complete” Determinism, and seeks to show its compatibility with responsibility and virtue.<sup>2</sup> This is done on the external ground that “rewards and punishments may encourage right volitions and discourage wrong volitions”<sup>3</sup>—surely a poor conception of responsibility. Another line adopted by psychologists is to eliminate the idea of volition (conation) as an independent factor in consciousness altogether. It is resolved into feeling—“kinæsthetic sensations,”—more fully into “sensation, idea, and emotion,” as by Mr. Taylor,<sup>4</sup> to whom the “self” is a “secondary product”; or into “attention,” as by Professor G. F. Stout, who challenges the identification with “feeling.”<sup>5</sup> The result reached by the different roads is the same—that “Free-will,” in any sense that gives it meaning in a moral system, is got rid of.<sup>6</sup> Therewith, as we have sought to show, modern thought comes into conflict

<sup>1</sup> See specially chaps. ix., x., xviii. in *Appearance and Reality*. “We shall find that the self has no power to defend its own reality from moral objections” (p. 103). Volition, as cause, is “illusory” (p. 115). “If time is not unreal, I admit that the Absolute is an illusion” (p. 206).

<sup>2</sup> *Dogmas of Religion*, chap. v.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 161.

<sup>4</sup> *Prob. of Conduct*, pp. 170, 172-3. The reader can judge how far the following throws light on the fact of “resolve”—“The state of mind commonly expressed by such phrases as ‘I’ll do it,’ seems to be no more than the change of emotional direction and intensity and the corresponding change in organic sensation, effected by the transition from a state of mental conflict to one of such steady and continuous diminution of emotional tension as we have described in our analysis of the simple forms of impulsive action” (p. 174).

<sup>5</sup> *Analytic Psychology*, i. pp. 118, 130; see the whole chapter, “Feeling and Conation.” “Wherein does this determination itself consist? Is it also a mode of being attentive? We answer this question in the affirmative” (p. 130).

<sup>6</sup> “This doctrine [of Free-will] may in philosophy be considered obsolete, though it will continue to flourish in popular ethics” (*Appearance and Reality*, p. 393). One might think here of certain indefensible theories, but Mr. Bradley’s philosophy compels the extension to *all* theories. “The questions commonly raised about the ‘freedom’ and the ‘autonomy’ of ‘will,’ have, from our point of view, no psychological significance” (Taylor, *Prob. of Conduct*, p. 177).

with irrefragable data of consciousness, and does violence to the august authority of moral law.

5. To sum up on this conflict of modern thought with Christian conceptions, it has been seen that this type of thought removes the theistic basis from moral law ; denies the ethical character of the Power at work in the universe ; denies absolute moral values ; negates free-will, and substitutes for it a rigorous Determinism ; in this way assails the foundations of moral obligation. Were these denials merely theoretic—had they only an academic character—the situation would be serious enough. But this cannot be affirmed regarding them. The change in theory, it is becoming apparent, involves a radical *change in ethical standards*—this of a kind which cannot be viewed with complacency by any Christian mind. Older writers, whatever their intellectual basis, generally kept tolerably close to the Christian virtues.<sup>1</sup> A bolder, more revolutionary spirit now prevails. Why should conventions be respected, when the supernatural sanctions which supported them have been completely swept away, and thinkers are hard at work breaking down the natural sanctions ? It is difficult to read without grave concern the chapters in advocacy of far-reaching changes in the ideas of sex-relations in such a book as Karl Pearson's *Ethic of Freethought*,<sup>2</sup> or even the more cautious, but highly casuistical treatment of the same subject, with leaning to liberty, in Mr. Taylor's *Problem of Conduct*.<sup>3</sup> The outstand-

<sup>1</sup> Dr. McTaggart notes that "Hegel's judgments as to what conduct was virtuous, and what conduct was vicious, would on the whole agree with the judgments that would be made under the influence of Christianity" (*Heg. Cosmol.*, p. 239). Mr. Spencer writes with some disappointment (Pref. to Parts v. and vi. of his *Ethics*): "The doctrine of evolution has not furnished guidance to the extent I had hoped. Most of the conclusions, drawn empirically, are such as right feelings, enlightened by cultivated intelligences, have already sufficed to establish."

<sup>2</sup> Specially Essays xiii. and xv.

<sup>3</sup> Pp. 206-18. Mr. H. Bolce, in his art. in the *American Cosmopolitan* (May, 1909) formerly referred to, gives extraordinary examples of "the

ing representative of this spirit of revolt in recent times is F. Nietzsche. It is not suggested that the opinions of this writer, taken in their entirety, are anything but a mad extreme. But one observes traces of a Nietzsche cult which is of no good omen, and certainly many of his ideas are "in the air." Nietzsche's ethics—if one may dignify them with this name—are avowedly antichristian. The last work completed by himself, which bears the name, *The Antichrist*, breathes a passionate hate of Christianity and all its works. With this rôle of Antichrist, as Riehl says,<sup>1</sup> Nietzsche, without doubt, identified himself. A sentence or two from admiring expounders will illustrate his positions. "In morality," we are told, "Nietzsche starts out by adopting the position of the relativist. He says, there are no absolute values 'good' or 'evil': these are mere names adopted by all in order to acquire power to maintain their place in the world, or to become supreme. . . . Concepts of good and evil are, therefore, in their origin, merely a means to an end, they are expedients for acquiring power."<sup>2</sup> His "transvaluation of all values" means the inversion of every Christian standard. "Voluptuousness, thirst of power, and selfishness—the three forces in humanity which Christianity has done most to garble and besmirch—Nietzsche endeavours to reinstate in their former places of honour."<sup>3</sup> "Life is something essentially immoral," Nietzsche tells us. . . . "Life is *essentially* appropriation, injury, conquest of the strong and weak, suppression, severity, obtrusion of its own forms, incorporation and at least, putting it mildest,

remarkable doctrines regarding morality, marriage, divorce, plural marriages, the home, religion," put forth by teachers of repute in colleges and universities in that country.

<sup>1</sup> *F. Nietzsche, der Künstler und der Denker* (3rd Edit.), p. 155.

<sup>2</sup> A. M. Ludovici, in Appendix to *Thus Spake Zarathustra* (E.T.), pp. 408-9.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 430.

exploitation.”<sup>1</sup> “ Instead of advocating ‘ equal and inalienable rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, ’ ” Nietzsche advocates “ unequal rights, and inequality in advantages generally, approximately proportionate to deserts : consequently, therefore, a genuinely superior ruling class at one end of the social scale, and an actually inferior ruled class, with slavery at its basis, at the opposite social extreme.”<sup>2</sup>

The picture may be left to speak for itself. One use at least Nietzsche serves—that of showing what morality without God, in a man of real genius, may come to.

JAMES ORR.

*HISTORICAL COMMENTARY ON THE FIRST  
EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY.*

XXI. THE WORDS OF THE FAITH AND OF THE SOUND  
DOCTRINE.

AN expression like this brings us face to face with the difficulty which weighs, probably more seriously, than anything else with most of those who doubt or deny the Pauline authorship of this and the other Pastoral Epistles. The writer of these letters uses the word “ Faith ” in a different way from the writer of the earlier Pauline Epistles. That is admitted. Does it follow that different persons wrote the two series of letters ? Is it necessary that, in the case of an idea so wide and comprehensive as Faith, a writer must always, in all circumstances and to all correspondents, throughout his life restrict himself to the same side and aspect of its connotation ? No one can, I imagine, maintain that Paul must necessarily restrict himself to one use of the term, unless he is also prepared to maintain that Paul was unable to conceive any other aspect of the

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 434.

<sup>2</sup> T. Common (translator), *Introd. to Beyond Good and Evil*, p. x.