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two things in the same breath? It is thus very unlikely that in disclaiming personal goodness Jesus is acknowledging sin.

Thirdly, what He does disclaim is personal goodness apart from God, incidentally rebuking a certain glibness on the part of the inquirer. Jesus was preoccupied with the glory of the heavenly world. He was a man Divinely obsessed. Beside the awful and all-pervading Goodness of God, who could be accounted good? Was this to admit sinfulness in Himself? Rather was it not the expression of a mood for which 'sinlessness' is altogether too inadequate a word? When a man is filled with the consciousness of God he must needs repudiate all comparison with Him.

'With infinite penetration, and with all the maturing value of the hours of devotion, Jesus walked this earth of ours, often more aware of Heaven than of the ground He trod, hourly accepting from the Father the gift of all beauty and all love with a gratitude deeper than any words could express. And if once and again he would pre-empt certain words such as "Father" and "Good" for God alone, what He said was symbolic truth, not to be measured by a forensic method, not the language of logic, but the poetry of the soul.'

Lastly, it should be remembered that Jesus could and did apply the word 'good' to the character and conduct of men. For example, He says in Mt 12^{35}: 'The good man out of his good treasure bringeth forth good things.' It is a reminder once more that His method of speech was never after the critical debating manner, and that sometimes He was led by the Spirit of God to take certain words out of their wonted associations and reserve them for the Divine alone.

Students of the history of Christian doctrine will have gathered that, although Mr. MARTIN repudiates the Liberal or Unitarian view of the Person of Jesus, he is in line not so much with the traditional orthodoxy of the Word made flesh as with the position, which also found exponents in the Ancient Church, that our Lord was a man wholly inspired or possessed of God.

Things most certainly Believed.

II.

BY THE REVEREND PRINCIPAL H. WHEELER ROBINSON, M.A., D.D., OXFORD.

ABOUT the beginning of this century two young ministers on the threshold of their work set themselves to discover their own fundamental convictions. It was ten o'clock at night when they began their discussion, and the light of dawn was coming through the blinds when they finished it. But they had been successful in reaching something that seemed fundamental to both of them, in the sense that it was the personal starting-point of their Christian faith. One of them held the conviction that whatever else was true or false there was somebody looking after us; the other, that if a man went on with what he believed to be right he would win through. These results might seem scanty in themselves, but they had the merit of being both simple and true for those concerned. It might be claimed that they are but differing emphases on a common truth, stated from what might be called Neo-Hegelian and Neo-Kantian bases respectively. It is the purpose of this article at any rate to attempt a statement of Christian faith from the standpoint of 'pragmatic moralism,' to use the name given to it by the Neo-Hegelian partner in the discussion.

If a Christian man examines carefully some dominating purpose of his own life, representing his true ideals, he can hardly miss its variability, the rise and fall of the intensity with which it is maintained. At one moment or period it is so strong that nothing seems able to resist it; at

another it is maintained lifelessly, if not for a time abandoned (with subsequent shame). Now this is the point at which morality ought to become religion. Faith that the purpose is God's as well as his own not only reinforces the sluggish will, but enables much to be regained when it has been temporarily lost.

The purpose is, in fact, seen to be at one and the same time both man's and God's, and in this is the secret of its strength and permanence. In the hours of moral weakness such a man will throw himself on his faith in God's purpose with all that this may involve of forgiveness and restoration. When, again, the moral purpose is itself strongly maintained, the faith that it is God's and due at last to His indwelling is the surest sanction of humility, that cardinal virtue of the Christian religion, as Augustine rightly maintained. Moreover, this unity of morality and religion in a worthy Christian purpose, a unity beyond analysis, is itself highly suggestive of the living unities for which we may look in other realms of Christian faith.

Though, however, we cannot analyse, we can usefully discern differing aspects or implications of such a unity. The Christian faith is inseparable from moral conviction either in its historical beginnings or in a present experience that can claim real continuity with it. Morality has again and again been the path of entrance into that faith. Many will recall the classical passage in which F. W. Robertson speaks of such an experience (*Life and Letters*, i. p. 103): 'I know but one way in which a man may come forth from his agony scathless; it is by holding fast to those things which are certain still —the grand, simple landmarks of morality. In the darkest hour through which a human soul can pass, whatever else is doubtful, this at least is certain. If there be no God, and no future state, yet, even then, it is better to be generous than selfish, better to be chaste than licentious, better to be true than false, better to be brave than to be a coward.'

Less well known is the similar experience of Horace Bushnell (*Life and Letters*, p. 58) in preaching 'On the Dissolving of Doubts,' at Yale. He described, in veiled form, his own experience. He had lost touch with God in his undergraduate days there and had found Him again by this path. Like those two of whom I spoke at the beginning of this article, he tried to get back to an inexpugnable conviction, and he found it in the distinction of right and wrong. But immediately came the thought, 'Have I then ever taken the principle of right for my law? I have done right things as men speak; have I ever thrown my life out on the principle to become all it requires of me?' When he had to answer 'no' to this question, there was born the resolve to begin there. 'If there is a God, as I rather hope there is, and very dimly believe, he is a right God. If I have lost him in wrong, perhaps I shall find him in right.' By such a faith Bushnell reached his Christian convictions, and was enabled to render his great services to religion and theology.

All this, of course, is but another way of saying that no ethical system is complete without a theology, and that all morality implies a religion. Canon F. R. Barry has put the point forcibly in his book, *The Relevance of Christianity* (p. 142): 'It is of the very nature of ethics that it passes into religion. For if our moral life is a ceaseless striving towards that which ever eludes us as we approach it, then it is for ever frustrated and fragmentary, thwarted by contradiction at the heart of us. In some sense or other the good must be *possessed*, as that which gives life its meaning and significance, even while we seek to achieve it.'

The distinctive quality here is that of authority. In moral experience we come *nearest* to an absolute authority, and to authority in its simplest form. The authority is indeed mediated by the whole personal character and social environment. It can never be wholly disentangled from false assumptions and wrong applications. But then, of course, the same thing applies to all external authority, such as the Bible or the Church. However much a man may desire to receive orders which he can obey mechanically, this is not part of God's purpose or method. His ideal is not military efficiency, but moral development. Our moral purposes, therefore, can neither be formed nor maintained without the exercise of moral responsibility.

So far, of course, nothing has been said that is specifically Christian, but we have an earnest of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in the claim that the moral purpose is God's as well as man's. It is naturally beyond the scope of a brief article to consider the philosophic problems here. It is sufficient to claim that even in ordinary moral experience there are features which find their best explanation in the Pauline doctrine of the fruit of the Spirit. That doctrine, again, is inseparable from the historic personality who gave real content to the doctrine as Paul proclaimed it. Let us use Schleiermacher's famous phrase, 'the fruits of the Spirit are the virtues of Christ,' in whom the Christian sees objectified that which the Spirit is in process of creating within himself. We may express it in another way by saying that to

such a man Jesus Christ, at first viewed simply as an historic figure, may come to shine as does the light of dawn. *There* on the horizon is the point at which spiritual forces are breaking in for his moral benefit. There is the pledge and assurance that his moral purpose belongs somehow to the universe as well as to himself and has God beyond it. There, too, the quality of his own purpose is purified and enriched beyond imagination.

This way of putting things is not to be confined to the human life and teaching of Jesus as factors of history. It can be extended to the whole conception of God, which is derived from what is technically called 'the Work of Christ.' The authority of the gospel always operates through a value judgment of the individual believer. That authority rests on the intrinsic worth of the revelation of God in Christ. It is revelation, but it is revelation through actualization. The significance of history for the Christian gospel consists in this quality of actuality. Just as the working out of a moral purpose into actual achievement is something beyond and other than the mere ideal, so the working out of God's purpose of sacrificial love in human history adds the new quality of actuality even to the Divine purpose. Jesus Christ did not invent something wholly new, but He did make Divine and Eternal truth actual in human experience, and in this actuality consists His authority over the sons of men.

What, then, is the relation of such a moral and religious experience to the natural and social environment in which man lives? Is the whole world about him something alien to his purpose and his faith? There are moments, of course, in his particular experience when he is tempted to believe this. He is shut up to God in his moral and religious experience, and may easily forget that the whole world of Nature is God's and that human society is made up of men and women of like passions with himself, for good as well as for evil. He may seem to stand alone like Elijah, though all around him there are others who share his truth in their own degree, the seven thousand who have not bowed their knees to Baal. As for Nature, which seems at first sight wholly indifferent to his desires and purposes, and as ready to crush the saint as to support the sinner, there is a further discovery for him to make. Once grant that the natural order is God's, and abandon the suggestion which Schweitzer made that God's love is a sort of gulf-stream flowing in a cold ocean, and we are able to learn a great deal about the gospel itself from Nature. Nature is neither moral nor immoral, it is simply non-moral, and serves a Divine purpose, which must not be forced into our measures of morality any more than God's whole nature and purpose must be subdued to them. There are invisible rays at both ends of the moral spectrum, those of Nature below and those of 'grace' above. Man's concern is the interpretation of both from his own place within the lighted area. Now it is matter of the commonest experience that Nature is full of what may be called inevitabilities beyond man's control or escape. Yet just because man is man he rises above the natural order by his power to transform it and give it a new meaning, and so, as Wordsworth said, 'turns his necessity to glorious gain.' This is what Jesus did with the Cross, and this is what His disciples have done with it ever since. The Cross is the great key to the Christian philosophy of Nature, and might be summed up as a 'transformed inevitability.' Just as the details of the Cross as an event in time are wholly subordinated to their spiritual significance and the actualization of the Divine purpose, so in the life and fortunes of every believer on Christ there can be a transformation of the natural into the spiritual which becomes an investment of treasure in heaven, something which moth and rust cannot corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal. 'Nothing is lost,' said Bourget, 'when we make an offering of it.' The inevitabilities of Nature are necessary at the lower level to teach us that God is greater than ourselves. At a higher level their function is to be transformed into something beyond and independent of themselves; they are taken up into the development of Christian personality and its fellowship with God. In this sense we may speak of the principle of mediation in Nature and human history, a mediation that is instrumental and not simply symbolic (if, indeed, such a distinction can ever be maintained in the last resort). Indeed, the Christian is always faced by this paradox, that his faith cannot be 'actual' and sincere unless he is somehow striving for the kingly rule of God in this world, whilst, on the other hand, it cannot be Christian unless he is ready to turn his back on the whole world and count it as nothing when it has served its Divine purpose. His concerns in time are nothing but toys from the standpoint of eternity. Coventry Patmore has a touching little poem which tells how he punished his little son for repeated disobedience. Later on, when he went to the child's bedside he found that the child had cried himself to sleep and that he had arranged all the little trifles, which often make a child's favourite playthings, beside his bed 'to comfort his sad heart.'

The father's own reaction to this sight became to him a parable of how God the Father must look on our sin and sorrow and all our childishness. We can put this great anthropomorphic argument (which has the benediction of our Lord upon it) in another poet's words, 'Thou must need me, since I need Thee so.' Most theologians must sometimes feel that poetry and music come much nearer to the truths they would express than their own philosophical arguments. The inner meaning of the gospel of God's love is a romance—true with the truth of actual history, yet poetical with the passion of a great purpose. All Christians are in their own degree responding to that romance, and are conscious of the shame of churlish ingratitude when they are unresponsive to it. In the presence of that frequent failure they throw themselves on the mercy of God, which Christ's life and death and resurrection have made actual to them. They may believe that the transformation of human sin into the glory of the Cross is the 'earnest' of the great cosmic atonement by transformation when all our human history shall be included as a sacrificial offering of Christ to God who shall be all in all.

As I review this statement of personal conviction and try to regard it from a more detached point of view, some reflections occur to me which may serve to round it off. It represents one particular kind of Christian experience, and there are many others. It starts with a great assumption which many to-day are not prepared to make. It represents the authority of the gospel as a consequence rather than an initial centre.

As to the first of these, I recall a remark of the friend to whom reference was made in the first paragraph of this article. As he lay, a few months back, on his deathbed, I recalled to him our early speculations as to how it would all look to us if we reached the sixties. He answered: 'The spiritual things are just as real to me as they ever were; as for the forms, they do not matter.' I think it is possible to concur fully with this, without any sacrifice of loyalty to the particular forms of faith in which we have grown up and to which we are accustomed. They are usually for us the truest and the best, because they have always to be judged in their relation to ourselves, and that relation has become sacramental. But God's cause is always immeasurably bigger than *my* cause.

The second point, the conviction that ordinary 'morality' does (in broad aspects) stand for something that has absolute authority over us, is one that is widely criticised to-day. The failure to distinguish 'origins' and 'sources' has led many to think that when we have traced the history of morality, we have deprived it of authority, and many familiar causes have contributed to the same end. No one who believes in the intrinsic worth of moral relations need regard this moral unrest as more than a temporary phase of our social history. If they are what we claim, they will sooner or later vindicate themselves, with whatever revision of detail may be necessary. The really unfortunate feature of the present situation is that so many young men and women are being deprived of that external discipline which is always necessary for growth into moral spontaneity. I do not know any book which has influenced me more profoundly than Kant's *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Ethics*, read in my undergraduate days. But I recognize now how much that influence depended on earlier training in the Victorian scheme of morality, with all its limitations.

The third criticism is sufficiently met when we remember that Christian faith had its historic beginnings in discipleship to a Jewish Rabbi, before it attained to the characteristic New Testament belief in a Risen Lord. It does not seem to me to make any essential difference to our ultimate faith in Christ that we began by recognizing Him as of 'yesterday,' if we go on to a vital contact with Him in the 'to-day' of our own experience, which carries with it the confidence of 'forever.' To avoid any risk of misunderstanding, let me say that I am in hearty agreement with the general theological conclusions of Dr. Garvie, in the previous article of this series. But his approach to them has obviously been very different from mine.

It will be in harmony with the 'pragmatic' character of this statement to assert once more the necessary ***unity*** of all living conviction. It has rightly been said by R. Winkler, in his *Das Geistproblem*, that every great return of faith in Christian history is a return to some simple unity, which subsequent generations (at a lower level of intensity) will set themselves to analyse. That is true of the individual life as of the society. The Christian faith is essentially based on the actuality of history—events which must seem remote from us, until they are assimilated by the response of personal faith. We always must unify what we assimilate. That is the great contribution which life ever makes to religion. Life, as Constance Holme frequently reminds us in her novels, is itself an achievement: 'that wonderful and dreadful pilgrimage that I have made with Time. Whatever the record, I have lived, finished the course, bound myself to

Eternity by the tendrils of experience and growth . . . an achievement of which even archangels might be proud.'

When this life is brought into relation with the great problems of religion, we may say of it, in the profound, if enigmatic, words of Wittgenstein (*Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, p. 186): 'We are conscious that even when all *possible* scientific questions are answered, the problems of our life are as yet not touched. Of course, there then remains no further question, and just this is the answer. The solution of the problem of life is seen in the disappearance of this problem.'

Such a consciousness gives deep meaning to that Old Testament prayer which is so true of life on the level of morality, and of God when morals are taken up into religion—'I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.' That the implicit prayer *is* answered is what I most certainly believe, and it is my fundamental conviction.

The Heretics of the Church and Recurring Heresies.

Nestorianism.

By Professor G. D. Henderson, D.Litt., Aberdeen.

I. At the present moment there is in Iraq a temporary settlement of very interesting people who form a most perplexing problem for world politicians. There have been schemes for finding them a home in Brazil or in British Guiana. But their future is still a matter of uncertainty and anxiety.

They are the last of the Nestorians. During the Great War they had to flee their villages in the mountains of Northern Kurdistan and on the shores of Lake Urmi in Persia, and a remnant, having endured unspeakable things, ultimately reached the refugee camp at Bakubah in the neighbourhood of Baghdad, where the present writer had occasional opportunity of visiting them, and where they enjoyed British hospitality along with many thousands of Armenians and other exiles, and added noticeably to the picturesqueness of the costume display in that strange canvas town. Their tragic experiences in the War are described in Wigram's *Our Smallest Ally*.

Simple, ignorant people, impulsive and excitable, primitive in many of their standards, exasperatingly innocent of most of our sanctions, they proved as difficult to save from themselves as from their hereditary enemies the Kurds and the Turks.

Their religion to-day is crude and superstitious, but observed with passionate devotion in Muslim surroundings. Such of their priests as have heard of Cyril of Alexandria would no doubt accept the Mosul version of the Definition of Chalcedon, which for 'blessed' reads 'accursed,' and Nestorius is the hero of many legends among them; but of theological animus or even interest there is none, and a large section of the Nestorians were received into Roman Communion as a Uniate and presumably Orthodox Church by the end of the seventeenth century, and exist on terms of equality alongside the Syrian or Uniate Jacobite Church, which similarly represents the Monophysites of the fifth century. Badger in his large work, *Nestorians and their Rituals*, gives a highly interesting picture of the life and opinions of these isolated Christian groups as he found them in the middle of the nineteenth century. The Nestorian Liturgy still in use is of some interest, and may be studied in Neale's *History of the Holy Eastern Church*, Maclean's *East Syrian Daily Offices*, and Brightman's *Liturgies*.

The most sensational period in the history of the Nestorian Church was that in which it showed itself a really great missionary agency in the seventh and succeeding centuries, spreading in Central Asia and China, and leaving its mark in the famous Nestorian Monument. For the story, we may turn to Stewart's eulogistic *Nestorian Missionary Enterprise*. The Christians of the Middle East had been prepared for this age of service and achievement partly by a strong Monasticism, not without resemblances to that of St. Martin of Tours and St. Columba, and partly by repeated experience of savage persecution.

We are too apt to see Church History against a merely Roman background, and to overlook the extent to which Christianity at a very early date spread eastward, the richness of its literature in those parts, and the heroism of its witness. Harnack's *Mission and Expansion* faintly suggests the