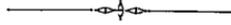


regard to the difficult and much-contested passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews, in which it is plainly stated that a death on the part of the covenanting party is essential to the validity of a covenant made with sacrifice.

A. H. WRATISLAW.



ART. V.—THEOLOGICAL TERMS: THEIR USE AND ABUSE.

THE heading of this paper is a somewhat indefinite one, and needs a little explanation. It is not our purpose to attempt any close examination of the terms proper to the science of theology—for, with the late Dean of Chichester, we have no hesitation in calling theology a science. The shortest of excursions will be made in this direction. We desire to raise this question: Is theological language the best vehicle of religious truth?

First of all, what do we mean by theology as distinct from religion, viewed theoretically? We feel there is a distinction, though we might find it a little difficult to define this distinction. To the mind of the Apostles this distinction could have no place. For they were engaged in creating a theology,¹ and

¹ Readers will not confound "the creation of a theology" with the creation of a *religion*. This latter, it need hardly be said, was within the province, as it was within the power, of no Apostle. The distinction drawn by Canon Liddon in his Bampton Lectures between the terms "religion" and "theology" is well known; nevertheless a reminder will be forgiven. "It has been maintained of late that the teaching of Jesus Christ differs from that of His Apostles and of their successors, in that He only taught religion, while they have taught dogmatic theology. This statement appears to proceed upon a presumption that religion and theology can be separated, not merely in idea and for the moment, by some process of definition, but permanently and in the world of fact. What, then, is religion? If you say that religion is essentially thought whereby man unites himself to the Eternal and Unchangeable Being, it is at least plain that the object-matter of such a religious activity as this is exactly identical with the object-matter of theology. Nay, more, it would seem to follow, that a religious life is simply a life of theological speculation. If you make religion to consist in 'the knowledge of our practical duties considered as God's commandments,' your definition irresistibly suggests God in His capacity of universal legislator, and thus carries the earnestly and honestly religious man into the heart of theology. If you protest that religion has nothing to do with intellectual skill in projecting definitions, and that it is at bottom a feeling of tranquil dependence upon some higher power, you cannot altogether set aside the capital question which arises as to the nature of that power upon which religion thus depends. . . . Religion, to support itself, must rest consciously on its object; the intellectual apprehension of that object is an integral element of religion. In other words, religion is practically

with it a language, and we are never well able to analyse our own work. They had a whole range of absolutely new truths to give to the world, and to accomplish this task they were compelled to have recourse to whatever helps existing language might afford. These helps were scanty. But one advantage Greek had for them which was perfectly unique, namely, its marvellous pliancy. Ready to hand, they found such words as *σάρξ, φύσις, λόγος, χάρις, ἐκκλησία, ζωή, πνεῦμα*. These they seized and utilized, infusing into them new meanings. Here and there they were obliged to coin; but, save in these rare instances, they availed themselves of the existing stock. Words that connoted the life and form of common things were spiritualized, and enriched with fresh significance. To a creative age they became new creations: teemed with ideas which were before in the air struggling for expression and embodiment.

The age of Apostles passes: the Patristic dawns. Heresies rise, demanding a strictly formulated belief. Creeds are constructed to supply weapons of defence; the faith, attacked, has to define itself. The necessity of definition gives birth to theological terminology. And as the conflict advances between assailed catholicism and the heresies that are perpetually seeking to disintegrate it, this theological terminology grows in bulk, and, in proportion to such growth, demands an increasingly delicate nicety of discrimination from those who use it—a nicety which our unphilosophic English renders sometimes almost impracticable.

Here comes in the danger. Notwithstanding this necessity of extreme caution in the use of the terms of this science, they are no sooner created and become the Church's proper language than they pass into the household possession of the multitude, and become the common property of all. "Terms," says Bishop Lightfoot, "like ideas, gradually permeate society till they reach its lower strata. Words stamped in the mint of the philosopher pass into general currency, losing their sharpness of outline meanwhile. The exclusive technicalities of the scholastic logic are the common property of shopmen and artisans in our own day."¹

As soon as this language is appropriated by the people, the process of crystallizing immediately sets in. The thought that gives rise to the word gradually recedes, and after a time all

inseparable from theology." In view of the allegation which the foregoing paragraph is constructed to meet, should we be far wrong in saying that in the teaching of Jesus Christ (speaking generally), theology is held in solution, in that of the Apostles, it is precipitated?

¹ Bishop Lightfoot's "Epistle to the Philippians," edit. 4, p. 130.

but vanishes. The term or phrase itself, originally the vehicle of the thought, goes on its way emptied of its freight, and rattles the louder for its emptiness. It is now a mere conventionality: everybody employs it—swears by it, anathematizes those who use it not. It becomes a charm to conjure with. The letter is worshipped, from which the spirit has fled.

And this bondage to phraseology goes on strengthening, until the letter is mistaken for the spirit, and, if any venture to state a given truth in any but the recognised phrases, the truth is not recognised—is stigmatized as error for the sake of the dress it is made to wear. If, for example, a preacher seldom lets fall in his pulpit utterances such words as “atonement,” “regeneration,” “conversion,” “substitution,” “satisfaction,” conscious that of these the first three occur each once in the New Testament, and this not in the sense often attached to them, and the last two are not found in Scripture at all, many persons amongst his hearers will consider him unsound, guilty of doctrinal hesitancy. The ring of the old story is lacking. It is in vain that he speaks forth the truth connoted by these words. The words themselves are wanting—and this is the unpardonable sin.

Perhaps it would be difficult to light on a pair of terms (both theologic and Scriptural) round which has gathered more mist than the terms “Flesh,” “Blood.” How many persons attach the Pauline sense to the first of these two terms? Some time ago quite the best instructed man in the writer’s Bible-class—a careful Bible-reader of fifty-five or sixty years of age—confessed surprise when told that the word had nothing to do with the body in many passages of St. Paul’s writings; that the spirit, not the body, was accountable in the first instance even for so-called sins of the flesh; that in the list of works of the flesh in Galatians v. are included “idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings,” none of which can be classed amongst fleshly sins; that the Apostle speaks of himself as no longer “in the flesh” in Romans vii. 5, “when we *were* in the flesh, the motions of sin,” etc.; that he tells his readers in Rome that they are “not in the flesh, but in the spirit” (Romans viii 9). The consequence of this common misconception respecting a frequently recurring term in St. Paul’s Epistles is, of course, that the physical part of us is mercilessly vilified in our popular theology, and made the scapegoat of the trespasses of the real self—the soul.

The term “Blood” presents us with a still more notorious misconception; and it is difficult to see how we shall ever get back to the simple ideas wrapt up with the word in Holy

Scripture. In Bishop Westcott's additional note to 1 John i. 7 the following sentences occur: "The interpretation of the passages in the New Testament which refer to the blessings obtained by the Blood of Christ must rest finally upon the interpretation given to the use of blood in the sacrificial system of the Old Testament. Our own natural associations with blood tend, if not to mislead, at least to obscure the ideas which it suggested to a Jew. . . . Two distinct ideas were included in the sacrifice of a victim—the death of the victim by the shedding of its blood, and the liberation, so to speak, of the principle of life by which it had been animated (for the Blood, in the general conception of it, met with throughout the Pentateuch, is the seat of life): so that this life became available for another end. The ritual of sacrifice took account of both these moments in the symbolic act. The slaughtering of the victim, which was properly the work of the offerer, was sharply separated from the sprinkling of the blood, which was the exclusive work of the priest. Thus, in accordance with the typical teaching of the Levitical ordinances, the Blood of Christ represents Christ's life (1) as rendered in free self-sacrifice to God for men and (2) as brought into perfect fellowship with God, having been set free by death. The Blood of Christ is, *as shed*, the *Life* of Christ given for men, and, *as offered*, the Life of Christ now given to men. . . . The blood always includes the thought of the life preserved and active beyond death. . . . The elements which are thus included" (so the note ends) "in the thought of the Blood of Christ, are clearly indicated in 1 John i. 9: 'God is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins' (the virtue of Christ's *death*), 'and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness' (the virtue of Christ's *life*)."

We will now examine the passages in which mention is made of the Blood of Jesus Christ in a theological as distinct from a simply historical connection. Without such a survey any exception we shall venture to take to the popular ideas associated with the word will be lacking in point.

In the New Testament there are some twenty-four references to the blood. In the Gospels the connection is confined to the mystical drinking of the blood, either in the Eucharist, or generally, as in the Discourse of the sixth chapter of St. John. There is in the Gospels no allusion to purifying, or cleansing, or sanctifying, or justifying. These ideas are encountered, subsequently, in the Epistles. The Epistle to the Romans supplies two passages: iii. 25, "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood"; v. 9, "Being now justified by His blood." The Epistles to the Corinthians contain only the allusion to the

Holy Sacrament: 1 Cor. x. 16; xi. 25, 27, quoting the Gospels. Four other references are to be found in St. Paul's letters; two in the Epistle to the Ephesians: i. 7, "In Whom we have redemption through His blood"; ii. 13, "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." The remaining two are met with in the Epistle to the Colossians: i. 14, "In Whom we have redemption through His blood"; i. 20, "And having made peace through the blood of His Cross." St. Peter has two passages: 1 Pet. i. 2, 19, "Through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ"; "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot." The writings of St. John, apart from his Gospel, contain six allusions: 1 John i. 7, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin"; v. 8, "There are three that bear witness, the Spirit, the water, and the blood"; Rev. i. 5, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood"; Rev. v. 9, "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood"; Rev. vii. 14, "These are they which have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb"; Rev. xii. 11, "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb."

As we might anticipate, the teaching respecting the blood is found to be the fullest in the Epistle to the Hebrews, dealing, as this Epistle does, with the sacrificial system of the Mosaic dispensation. Seven references are afforded: ix. 12, 14, 22, "By His own blood He entered in once into the Holy Place"; "How much more shall the blood of Christ purge your conscience from dead works"; "Almost all things are by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood is no remission"; x. 19, 29, "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus"; "The blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified"; xiii. 12, 20, "That He might sanctify the people with His own blood"; "The God of peace, Who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through (Rev. Vers. reads, "with") the blood of the everlasting Covenant." These, with one verse in the Acts of the Apostles, xx. 28, "The Church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood," are all the references in which a theological import is attached to the blood of our Redeemer. Glancing through this catena, we may thus summarize the teaching of the New Testament on the subject.

In five passages the blood of Christ is stated to be the price of our purchase; in two, it is viewed as the means of our

reconciliation, of the Divine propitiation; in one, of our justification; in one, of peace being made between God and man. In six, it is the means (externally) of our sanctification, variously described as a sprinkling, a purging of the conscience, a washing, of the person or the raiment. In one passage it is the means of atoning for transgression. Without it, according to one passage, there is no possibility of remission; in one, it is a witness of the covenant. By it, in one, final victory is secured.

In some of these passages it will be noticed that the phrase "the blood of Christ" is employed without any metaphor—"justified," "purchased," "reconciled," "forgiven" by, or through, the Blood, calls up no image, whereas such expressions as "cleansed," "purged," "washed" by the blood are pictorial. No one can understand them literally. And the very variety of the language adopted by the sacred writers shows how far they must have been from any bondage to mere phraseology. Had it been ordered that the Saviour should lay His life down in some way that had not included the effusion of blood, the efficacy of that death would, of course, have been the same. But we may confidently say that the whole of the allusions to blood, to which we have turned, would have been wanting to the New Testament, and so wanting to Christian thought. The bloodshedding was but a method; and to the virtue of the death the method was subsidiarily material. We should have escaped that confusion of ideas in which we become involved when we combine the cleansing-blood with the cleansing-spirit—the spirit, of which not blood but *water* is the outward symbol. Now contrast with this Scriptural usage that of popular theology. Here the blood is regarded as the *element* of cleansing. Look into any revivalist hymn-book, and notice how hymn after hymn speaks of this, as the main purpose for which the Mediator died—to wash us in His spilled blood. Yet what sound meaning can be attached to the phrase "washed *IN* the blood"? In the two passages of the Revelation, i. 5, vii. 14, from which the expression is taken—for we look in vain for anything equivalent to it in any doctrinal writing—the Greek for the word "*in*" is perfectly capable of being rendered "BY," and indeed, in the former of these passages, the Revisers have thus rendered it, reading also "*loosed*" (λύσαντι) for "washed" (λούσαντι). It is curious, also, that, in xxii. 14, the rival readings ποιούντες τὰς ἐντολάς, πλύνοντες τὰς στολάς should be found contending for the text, as if still further to discourage this particular aspect of the subject. The clashing of images is unavoidable in the second passage (vii. 14), as the effect of robes dipped

in blood would be, not to wash white but to dye red. "Wherefore art Thou *red* in Thine apparel? Their blood shall be sprinkled upon My garments, and I will stain all My raiment." Yet how much of our conventional references, especially those of our hymnals, gives currency to the grossest materialistic views. Recognised phrases are used, to which custom has given its unchallenged sanction, and their sound shapes itself into a lullaby to rock the reflective powers to slumber.

The review of this term has taken longer than was intended. But its importance will be our justification. We might discuss many another; *e.g.*, "person," "substance," "grace," "feeling," "nature," "substitution," some of them Biblical, some not; but to all of which, as used by the generality of Christians, the most inexact, and not seldom untrue, conceptions cling. We have space for but two of these: "grace," "feeling."

"Grace."—(a) In its original use, the word simply described "that property in a thing which causes it to give joy to the hearers or beholders of it" (Trench). For a New Testament example of this primary meaning of the term, instance St. Luke iv. 22, "And all wondered at the gracious words (words of grace) which proceeded out of His mouth." Possibly also Eph. iv. 29 may supply a second example.

(b) From connoting a quality it passed next to connote the thing in which that quality resided. So we still speak of asking or granting a grace or favour. In this secondary sense we encounter the word in Acts xxv. 3, "The Jews desired *favour* against Paul"; 2 Cor. viii. 19, "Who was also chosen of the Churches, to travel with me with this grace (*i.e.*, the contributions of the Christians towards the support of the poor brethren in Judæa) which is ministered by us."

(c) The third stage in the growth of the usage is reached, when the word is taken for the feeling and expression of grateful acknowledgment which the benefit done draws forth in return. In this signification the word occurs in St. Luke xvii. 9, "Doth he thank that servant (lit., Hath he grace to that servant) because he did the things that were commanded him?" Rom. vi. 17, "But God be thanked (lit., grace to God) that ye have obeyed from the heart," etc.

(d) Here we approach that still higher and holier virtue that lies now in the word. All favours done by man to man are done to equals, and it may at any time be conceivably possible that the person benefited may be able to do as much for the benefactor. Not so with the Divine favours. We cannot even be thankful without increasing the measure of

that for which we give thanks. Gratitude itself is a grace. Further: not only is the grace of the Almighty seen in the bestowal of undeserved favours, but becomes still more evident in His dealings with us, as delinquents; transgressors of His laws. His grace is shown chiefly in the forgiveness of our sins; and this as the issue of that preparatory work of grace, the Atonement wrought by the Son of God. For instances of this use of the term, see St. John i. 17, "Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ"; Acts xiv. 3, "The Lord gave testimony to the word of His grace"; Acts xx. 24, "To testify the Gospel of the grace of God"; Rom. v. 2, "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand"; Rom. vi. 14, "Ye are under grace."

(e) There is yet another application of the word. As all good motives and influences are originated by God, so the word which is employed to express the Divine goodness put forth actively upon us—outside us—is used also to express that goodness when it is energetically put forth within the heart. From grace being *upon* us, or our being *under* grace, grace is finally spoken of as being *within* us. It is this sense that is most commonly present to us, in using the word absolutely, without an article, "grace." Under this head we may cite, Rom. i. 5, "By whom we have received grace"; 1 Cor. xv. 10, "By the grace of God I am what I am"; 2 Pet. iii. 18, "Grow in grace."

There are few words in our religious vocabulary, the exact meaning of which in any given passage it is more necessary accurately to ascertain. Our search for the meaning is not made the easier by the unfortunate circumstance, that at least *five* English words have been used by our translators to render this single one ("grace," "favour," "gift," "thanks," "benefit"); and this almost promiscuously, with little or no deference to the five several senses mentioned above.

"*Feeling*."—This term, as applied to a certain condition of the emotional faculty, is distinctly of modern growth. It is the offspring of revivalist times. Persons of a morbidly introspective tendency are frequently to be met with who give themselves needless distress on the score of the absence, or the intermittent presence, of warm "feeling." They forget that as a factor in the propelling spiritual forces of our being, feeling is strongest in youth, and for a good reason. It occupies the place, and does much of the work, of "habit." In proportion as habit grows in strength does feeling find diminished scope. And only as a motive-force is feeling of any practical worth at all. The emotional faculty is too suspiciously subservient to the state of the blood to become a

reliable criterion, in the estimate of our spiritual standing in the sight of Heaven. The Christian surely rests his confidence in the comfortable fact of his personal acceptance with his God, not upon his own fluctuating feelings, but upon the inviolable Word of the Covenant, which "liveth and abideth for ever."

Now it might surprise those upon whose lips this word "feeling" is so constantly found, to learn that this pet term of theirs is nowhere to be met with on the pages of the New Testament: neither the term nor its cognate verb. In our Authorized Version the noun does occur twice, but in neither passage does it appear in the Greek, its use in our translation being merely paraphrastic; and in neither passage is there the remotest allusion to so-called religious feelings. The phrase, "past feeling,"¹ in Ephesians iv. 19, describes the callous condition of a hardened sinner's slighted conscience; the beautiful words, "touched with the feeling of our infirmities,"² in Hebrews iv. 15, refer to the sympathy of the exalted Mediator resulting from His acquaintance with human nature. So little Scriptural encouragement is given to this modern reliance on feeling for our assurance.

This last word "assurance" is found in three passages of the New Testament, always qualified by the adjective "full." In Colossians ii. 2, we read of the "full assurance of understanding"; in Hebrews vi. 11, of the "full assurance of hope"; in Hebrews x. 22, of "the full assurance of faith."³ Our faith, our hopes may be confirmed by the weight of intellectual conviction, and by means of this "three-fold cord," not quickly to be broken, we may have "a strong consolation"; but we look in vain for any account afforded in New Testament usage of the present popular conception of assurance as involving strong feeling. Fuller and fuller, as the life-sands run down, grows the assurance of the faith, the hopes, the understanding of the believer, and as he looks back to the early day-dawn of the soul, and contrasts with its strong present rest the evanescent feelings belonging to that long-past prime, that contrast is not too partially drawn in the glad question, "What is the chaff to the wheat?"

This paper might, without difficulty, be indefinitely lengthened. Instances might be readily multiplied, where the original significance of the term or phrase has been modified or altogether let slip; or where a term or phrase has little to recommend it save its general acceptance, being as a vehicle

¹ οἴτινες ἀπηγηκότες.

² δυνάμενον συμπάθῃσαι ταῖς ἀσθενείαις ἡμῶν.

³ In the last two passages the Revised Version has "fulness," relegating "full assurance" to the margin.

of theological truth either inexact, or inadequate, or misleading. Enough, however, has been offered to indicate the responsibility that attends the handling of the subject; enough to draw attention to the hazard of a slipshod use of the terms of this sacred science.

In view of the present difficulties of their task, it would appear expedient that preachers and teachers should, in their public utterances to a mixed audience, be very guarded, and even sparing, in their use of theological language, and clothe the truths they have to present in as unconventional a dress as possible, avoiding abstract terms where they may be dispensed with without lowering the dignity of the theme. The writer remembers how once, years ago, when he was called to preach to a north-country congregation, the old rector cautioned him on the previous Saturday evening: "We want," he said, "the concrete here." We suspect other folds besides the one referred to need a similar diet. Whenever another treatment is indispensable, let the preacher select his phraseology with the carefulest discrimination, defining at every step. No mean part of his duty should be to insist upon exactness, first of thought, then of its expression. The majority in every community will, we fear, always be satisfied with clap-trap; but it lies upon the teacher to ensure that they do not get it. Besides which, as a brilliant writer says, "A paper currency is employed, when there is no bullion in the vaults." It is our high service to see that the currency of our divinity shall be gold, and not paper; and that each several piece we trade with shall be stamped with the image and superscription of Heaven's truth.

ALFRED PEARSON.

ART. VI.—THE VALLEY OF THE NAP.

TWO hours by rail from the capital of Austria brings us to one of the loveliest valleys among the Tyrolese mountains. The whole country, indeed, is celebrated "for its airy beauty, rocky mountains, smooth green valleys, and swift-rushing streams." Odorous pinewoods clothe the steep mountain slopes, crowned by battlements of gray rocks, and little villages inhabited by a simple-hearted and kindly peasantry, mostly engaged in wood-cutting and toy-making, lie sheltered here and there under the shadow of the glorious hills. Lakes, waterfalls, woods, deep ravines, brightened with lovely ferns, and grim-looking castles with a story attached to them, give a rare picturesque aspect to the whole scene.