outer man. The action of the law on the flesh on the one hand and on the conscience on the other makes me feel that I am two, not one, and this duality is at once my misery and my hope: my misery, for it is wretched to be drawn two ways; my hope, for I ever feel that my flesh and my sin though mine are not myself. This feeling all may share. On the bright hopeful side as well as on the darker St. Paul is the spokesman for the race. His *ταλάιπωρος ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπος* voices not only the universal need but the universal desire for redemption. It is the *de profundis* of sin-oppressed humanity. The apostle's doctrine of sin is not flattering, but neither is it indiscriminate. It is not a doctrine of total unrelieved depravity. It recognises a good element in average human nature. As described that element appears weak and ineffectual. But the important thing to note is that it is there.

A. B. BRUCE.

ABELARD'S DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT:

A UNIVERSITY SERMON.

"Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."—*Matthew* xx. 28.

AMONG all the passages of the New Testament in which our Lord is said to have died *for* men, this is the only one in which the preposition *ἀντὶ* is employed.[1] The usual preposition is *ὑπὲρ*; and, where that is the case, I need hardly say that the attempt to read into the text the meaning "instead of," "as a substitute for," or the like, is wholly gratuitous. To suffer death, vicariously as a substitute for others would no doubt be to suffer *ὑπὲρ*,[2] on behalf of, for

[1] With the parallel, Mark x. 45. It is possible that Luke xxii. 27 may be nearer to the original form of our Lord's saying. But even if a touch of theological reflection has been imparted to this record of our Lord's words, the tradition is clearly a very ancient one.

[2] Cf. the late Prof. Evans' note on *ὑπὲρ* in the *Speaker's Commentary, N.T.*, vol. iii. p. 371.

the sake of others; but that is clearly not implied by the Greek. Christ may be no less truly said to have suffered on our behalf in whatever way or ways His sufferings have tended to the benefit of His brethren still on earth.

When we come to the solitary passage from which my text is taken, the patristic idea of a satisfaction or propitiation and the more characteristically Protestant idea of a vicarious punishment, have at first sight more to say for themselves. *Ἀντὶ* undoubtedly does mean "instead of," "in place of." But a moment's candid consideration of the context will perhaps satisfy us that no theory of substitution can really get much support from the metaphor of our text. In the first place be it observed that even in this passage—the very *locus classicus* for such theories—the death of Christ is primarily set before us as an *example:* His death is looked upon as the culminating act of a self-sacrificing *life.* We are enjoined to serve our fellow-men in the same way in which Christ served us. The giving of His life is mentioned as the most signal instance of His ministry to His fellow men: "Whosoever would be first among you shall be your minister. Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." It is clearly most agreeable to the context to suppose that His death is set forth as being serviceable to others in the same sort of way as His life of teaching and example and sympathy.

But the question may be asked, "To whom is the ransom paid?" That, however, is a question to which no answer need be, and (as I venture to think) no answer ought to be, given. The idea of a ransom paid to the Devil and the idea of a ransom paid to God are alike entirely foreign to the context. The idea is not that of a debt undertaken, still less of a punishment submitted to instead of us, but of a ransom paid to win us back from slavery or captivity. Christ's death was the price, the cost of that deliverance;

the ransom paid is the equivalent not of our sins but of us. We are not debtors but captives, whom Christ has emancipated at the cost of His own life. Is the question asked, Emancipated from what? Here again there is nothing in the immediate context to supply an answer. But if a categorical answer must be given, the whole tenour of Christ's teaching requires us to say, "Emancipated from sin"—not primarily from the punishment of sin nor yet from the spirit of evil, but from sin itself. Even this interpretation is perhaps pressing the metaphor further than need be. We ought to interpret the passage rather in the light of that dominant idea of all the Master's teaching, the idea of a Kingdom of Heaven. The prominent thought is not what Christ delivered men from, but what He bought them for. He bought them for His kingdom, He made them subjects of His spiritual empire, at the cost of His own death. That is the ultimate purpose of all Christ's work, of which even the deliverance from the slavery of sin is but a negative and a subordinate aspect.

The history of the interpretation of this text is indeed a melancholy example of the theological tendency to make systems out of metaphors. The earliest Christian writers cannot be said to have a theory of the Atonement at all: their language admits for the most part of whatever interpretation we can legitimately assign to the New Testament expressions upon which it is based. Irenæus is the first to suggest with any definiteness the idea of a ransom paid by Christ to Satan. Entirely free from the horrible idea of an angry and revengeful Father propitiated by a loving and merciful Son, Irenæus does hold that a ransom was owing to the Prince of Evil. By sin man had become the thrall of Satan. Satan had acquired rights over him. God wanted to recover his lost dominion over fallen man, to win him back to His love and His service. But "it became God" (says Irenæus) "to receive what He willed by per-

suasion and not by force, so that neither might justice be violated nor God's ancient creation perish." "Christ compensated our disobedience by His obedience." The death of Christ was brought about by Satan's machinations; but, since He was innocent, Satan had no right to *His* life; so that now it became compatible with justice that man, over whom he *had* just dominion, should be set free from his sovereignty. Why Satan brought about Christ's death, why he consented to accept Christ's death as an equivalent for his dominion over mankind (and indeed many other difficulties which may naturally arise) Irenæus leaves unexplained. The system suggested by Irenæus is more fully elaborated by Origen. In Origen,[1] and still more clearly in later Fathers, it appears that Satan was deliberately deceived by God. He was somehow or other induced to believe that in bringing about the death of Christ he would get possession of His soul. But there he had over-reached himself; he found that there was one soul which could not be held in Hades. The very device by which he had hoped to complete his triumph became the means of his own ruin, and the whole body of his ancient subjects escaped his grasp.

Such, in brief outline, was the theory of the Atonement which on the whole held possession of Christian theology throughout the patristic period. In saying this, however, I ought to add that the Atonement, at least the theoretical justification of the Atonement, is not a prominent feature of patristic teaching. To the Fathers, "as to the Church of all ages," says Mr. Oxenham, "it was not the Atonement but the Incarnation which was the centre of Christian faith as of Christian life."[2] And in their teaching about the Incarnation, many of them—especially of the Greek Fathers—do suggest much nobler and more rational answers to the

[1] *In Matt.*, Tom. xiii. 8, 9, xvi. 8. *In Rom.*, iii. 7, iv. 11; cf. Bigg, *The Christian Platonists of Alexandria*, Oxford, 1893, p. 210 *sq.*

[2] *The Catholic Doctrine of the Atonement*, ed. 3, 1881, p. 166, a work to which I must acknowledge great obligations.

question how Christ's life and sufferings really did make possible a new spiritual birth for humanity at large as well as for individual souls—answers by the side of which the theory of a ransom owed to Satan may well be deemed as superfluous, as it must to every modern mind seem arbitrary, childish, and immoral. But so it is. In that edifice of gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, stubble, which the theologians of the first no less than of later ages have built upon the one foundation, we must be content to cherish and to reverence the more precious and permanent elements while we abandon the more perishable to their inevitable decay.

I will not attempt to trace this marvellous theory through the various phases and modifications which it underwent during the more than eight centuries of its almost undisputed reign. By minds like Origen's we may indeed doubt whether it was ever accepted with the deadly literalness with which it was certainly understood by the Church of the Dark Ages. I wish to call attention rather to the work of the great men to whom Christendom owes its emancipation from this grotesque absurdity. Among all the enormous services of Scholasticism to human progress none is greater than this; none supplies better evidence that in some respects the scholastic age was intellectually in advance of the patristic. The demolition of this time-honoured theory was effected principally by two men—one the most lovable of mediæval saints, the other the greatest of mediæval thinkers; one the herald and precursor, the other the actual father or creator of the Scholastic Theology.[1] The attack on the received Theology was begun by St. Anselm; the decisive victory was won by Abelard. Seldom, indeed, has a theological system crumbled to pieces so rapidly, so completely, and so irrevocably. Abelard's timid disciple, Peter the Lombard,[2] is the last important writer

[1] Doubt had been suggested by John of Damascus. *De Fid. Orth.*, iii. 27; but cf. iii. 19.

[2] *Sent.*, iii. 19.

to maintain this theory of a ransom paid to Satan. And among all that crop of strange and terrible theories of the Atonement which sprang up at and after the Reformation, the old patristic view has (I believe) never been revived.

Neither of these great Schoolmen were mere destructives. They demolish the ransom theory only to clear the ground for a worthier and more reasonable view of God's dealings with mankind. Anselm's theory of the Atonement is familiar to all theological students. And at the present day it will probably be felt that, though free from the coarse grotesqueness of the older view, it is open to some of the same objections as its predecessor on the score both of Logic and of Morality. In the *Cur Deus Homo* the death of Christ still remains a debt owed, not indeed to the Evil One, but to an abstract Justice, or rather perhaps to God Himself. Man had sinned. By sin, by failing to be what God intended him to be, man had robbed God of something which was His due. Man had thereby incurred to God a debt so great that nothing in the whole universe that was not God could be an adequate compensation to Him. It would not beseem the honour or the justice of God that He should forgive man's sin without demanding this satisfaction. Nothing which was not God would satisfy His claims; and yet the debt must be paid by man. Even the Word who was God could satisfy it only by becoming man; only so could He die, and by so doing pay to God something which was more precious than that of which God had been robbed by the sin of man, and yet something which was not owing to him *ex debito justitiæ*.

I will not dwell upon the obvious difficulties of this scheme, which exercised more influence over Wyclif and the Reformers than over Anselm's immediate successors. I leave it without comment, and pass on to the very different theory which meets us in Abelard. "To us it appears,"[1] he says, "that our justification and reconciliation

[1] *Opera*, ed. Consin. 1859, p. 207.

to God in the blood of Christ is due to this, that through the singular favour exhibited to us in the taking of our nature by His Son and His perseverance even unto death in instructing us alike by word and by example, God bound us to Himself more fully than before by love; so that kindled by so great a beneficence of Divine favour, true charity fears no longer to endure anything for His sake. . . . Accordingly our redemption lies in that supreme love shown towards us through the passion of Christ, which not only liberates us from the slavery of sin, but acquires for us the true liberty of the sons of God; so that henceforth we should fulfil all duties rather from love than from fear of Him who showed to us so great favour than which none greater can be discovered; as He Himself saith, 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay his life for his friend.' Concerning this love, indeed, the Lord says in another place, 'I came to send fire on the earth, and what will I but that it be kindled?' For the propagation of this true liberty, therefore, it is that He declares Himself to have come."

Three points may be noticed in this Abelardian view of the Atonement:—

(1) There is no notion of vicarious punishment, and equally little of any vicarious expiation or satisfaction, or objectively valid sacrifice,[1] an idea which is indeed free from some of the coarse immorality of the idea of vicarious punishment, but is in principle somewhat difficult to distinguish from it.

(2) The atoning efficacy of Christ's work is not limited to His death. Christ's redeeming work is not on the one hand confined (in Socinian fashion) to teaching or even example, though it includes both; His love to man reveals

[1] That Christ's life and death were in the truest and highest sense a sacrifice is a doctrine of the highest value, and is quite consistent with the view taken in these pages. But to develop this aspect of our Lord's work falls beyond the scope of this sermon.

in a unique way the love of the Heavenly Father, because He is in a unique sense the Son of God. But neither, on the other hand, is His atoning work limited to the crucifixion. The whole life of Christ, the whole Revelation of God which is constituted by that life, excites the love of man, moves his gratitude, shows him what God would have him be, enables him to be in his imperfect way what Christ alone was perfectly, and so makes at-one-ment, restores between God and man the union which sin alone has destroyed.

And (3) it follows from this view of the Atonement that the justifying effect of Christ's work is a real effect, not a mere legal fiction. Christ's work really does make men better, instead of merely supplying the ground why they should be considered good or be excused the punishment of sin, without being really made any better than they were before.

Justification and sanctification become (to quote the learned Romanist theologian whom I cited before) "different names for the same thing, according as it is viewed in its origin or its nature, except that, in ordinary language, justification is used for the initial act on the part of God in a process of which sanctification, in its fullest sense, is the gradually accomplished result; they stand to each other in the spiritual life as birth in the natural life to the gradual advance to maturity." [1]

Such was the doctrine that moved the unmeasured wrath of Abelard's great enemy, St. Bernard. And, be it observed, St. Bernard is as vehement against the negative as against the positive side of Abelard's doctrine. To St. Bernard the doctrine of the Atonement stands or falls with that theory of the ransom paid to the Devil which Catholic Christendom was (little as Bernard imagined it) just on the point of throwing off. If so, the saintly Archbishop of Canterbury was as great a heretic as Abelard, though neither he nor St. Bernard seems to have been aware of the fact.

[1] Oxenham, *op. cit.*, pp. 227–8.

But whatever may be thought on this point, it is indeed strange that such a man as St. Bernard should solemnly include in a list of Abelard's heresies, which he prepared for the information of the Pope, the statement, "I think therefore that the purpose and cause of the Incarnation was that He might illumine the world by His wisdom, and excite it to the love of Himself." Such was one of the doctrines (so far as we can gather) which was solemnly condemned by a Pope and Council. Inadequate some even of our modern Theologians might pronounce it. But what a host of authorities—patristic, scholastic, Anglican, Protestant—might be produced in its favour! From what Theologian, since Theology began, could you not extract some close parallel to this beautiful expression of the whole Gospel message, unless it be some rigid Lutheran? And even the most rigid Lutheran cannot always remain faithful to a scheme of justification in which love plays no part, in which the love of God outpoured on Calvary is not allowed to awaken any response in the human heart, lest perchance even the admission of man's capacity for gratitude, often the very last spark of the Divine nature to forsake the breast of the vilest criminal—lest even this admission might be to concede too much to human merit and to detract from that comfortable doctrine of the total depravity of the human nature which God created in His own likeness and after His own image." Nor would the name of St. Bernard himself be absent from the *catena* of Abelard's adherents. Raising the question whether God could have found any other means of redeeming fallen man besides the method of the Incarnation, he replies (against Anselm) that He could have done so, but "He preferred to do it at His own cost, lest he should give any further occasion for that worst and most odious sin of ingratitude in man."[1]

All through the Christian ages it has been surely the love

[1] Serm. xi. *in Cant.*

of God revealed in Christ which really has won the heart of man, and made the Christian doctrine of the Atonement a real instrument of moral improvement, however inadequate, monstrous, even revolting, sometimes has been the intellectual embodiment which it has received either from formal Theology, or from popular sentiment. Those whose theories have most tended to obscure the doctrine of Divine love have yet felt its power. But let it not be supposed that on this account theological theories are matters of no importance. Nobody, perhaps, ever felt the Divine love more powerfully, or worked more energetically in the strength of it than Luther, and yet if the love of Protestant Europe seems to have waxed in these latter days so very cold that there is some excuse for the contempt which it has unfortunately become fashionable among ourselves to speak of Continental Protestantism, it is largely owing to the paralysing influence of that formal divorce which Luther proclaimed between religion and morality in his theories of a faith which did not necessarily work by love.

"The purpose and cause of the Incarnation was this, that Christ should illumine the world by His wisdom and kindle it to the love of Himself."[1] At the present day this heresy of Abelard's would be welcomed as the very heart and essence of Christ's good news by Christians of almost every shade of ecclesiastical and theological opinion. In all modern statements of the doctrine this aspect of the Atonement as a revelation of Divine Love occupies the first place. We do indeed find modern Theologians setting up side by side of this clear and intelligible doctrine theories, on the one hand, of an objectively valid satisfaction or expiation; on the other, of a mystical retrospective participation by Christians in the sufferings of Christ. But I venture to say that when these theories come to be analysed and thought out, it will be found that they resolve themselves

[1] Abelard, *Opera*, II. p. 767.

either into that notion of vicarious punishment which is now so heartily repudiated by nearly all Theologians,[1] or into what is practically the Abelardian view. If satisfaction does not mean vicarious punishment, what can it mean except that the suffering Christ removed the consequences of sin by making a new life possible without punishment? Or, if we are told that Christ offered an acceptable sacrifice to the Father, to what, if the idea of appeasing an offended Deity be rejected, can the sacrifice be conceived of as owing its acceptability or validity, except to its actual effects in awakening the love of Christ, and of all good, and the hatred of all evil? In what other way can another's suffering, or even the man's own suffering, be conceived of as purging away sin? Or if, as with Dr. Dale, the prominent idea is that the Christian identifies himself with Christ in such wise that he can really be said to have shared in His expiatory sufferings,[2] what can this mean (in actual sober fact) but that the love of Him who suffered awakens a sorrow for sin which does the work of actual punishment in the contrite heart? After all I cannot but feel that these modern theories of the Atonement are not very deeply held. When the Theologian is defending his own orthodoxy or writing formal theological treatises, then he feels bound, out of deference to tradition, to a system of Biblical exegesis, or to the authority of great names, to repeat more or less of the old language, while he repudiates what will seem to most minds its natural meaning and its logical consequences. But when he leaves the cave of theological formulæ and comes down into the world to speak to the hearts

[1] By none more fully and frankly (among orthodox Theologians) than by Canon Mason, *The Faith of the Gospel*, chap. vi., most of whose language I could cordially adopt, though his attempts to read new meanings into old language are not always quite satisfying.

[2] On *The Atonement*, ed. xi., 1888, p. 425 *sq.* This view appears in combination with theories which seem to me attenuations of the traditional views which Dr. Dale repudiates.

and consciences of man, then we find it is usually of the character of God revealed in Christ that he speaks, of the love of Christ for man in life and in death, of the demand which that revelation makes for answering love, of the example of Christ, of the hope inspired by His Resurrection, of the assurance which all this work of Christ brings with it of forgiveness, renewal, and spiritual life for all mankind. It is of these things that the preacher elects by preference to speak rather than of satisfaction or expiation, or mystic identification.

The hold which what I may venture to call Abelard's view of the Atonement (though, as I have pointed out, it is Abelard's only, because he extricated it from the confused and childish notions with which it had been associated)—the hold which this view has obtained over the Church of to-day can hardly be traced back through any direct historical succession to the influence of Abelard. Abelard did indeed shatter for ever the theory of a ransom paid to Satan: and the more refined theories of the Atonement maintained by the later Schoolmen bear witness to his influence. But still the Church did not at once accept Abelard's view in its simplicity and entirety. The Schoolmen who followed Abelard inherited his dialectical method, and something too of his spirit. To men like St. Bernard, the *Summa Theologiæ* of St. Thomas, with its full statement of objections and free discussion of difficulties, would have seemed as shocking an exhibition of human pride and intellectual self-sufficiency as the *Theologia* of Abelard. But Abelard's successors do not share his boldness, his penetrating keenness of intellectual vision, his uncompromising resolve that, while authority shall have its due weight, neither truth nor reason nor morality shall be sacrificed to it. Even from the slight specimen I have given you of Abelard's teaching you may possibly have been struck with the modernness of his tone. Abelard in the 12th century seems to stretch

out his hands to Maurice and Kingsley and Frederick Robertson in the 19th. At least, I know not where to look for the same spirit of reverent Christian Rationalism in the intervening ages unless it be in the Cambridge Platonists.

Abelard's doctrine of Redemption is not the only feature of his teaching that savours of the modern spirit. The task which Abelard set before himself is precisely the task to which the Church of our day is imperatively called. In Abelard's day the task was essayed—almost for the first time in the history of the Church—of reducing Christian teaching to the form of a systematic and coherent body of philosophical doctrine. The human mind was just awakening from a long slumber, and was insisting that the traditional faith of the Church should give an account of itself. The result of the effort inangurated by Abelard was the scholastic Theology. The scholastic Theology in its developed form only partially reproduced the spirit of its parent, but still nothing betrays more unfailingly a lack of the historical spirit and the historical temper than a tone of undiscriminating contempt in speaking of the scholastic Philosophy and the scholastic Theology. It was a noble and stimulating idea surely that of a science of the highest generalisations, a science that should present the deposit of traditional and historical faith in its due relation to all other branches of knowledge, accepting and fusing into itself the highest and the truest that is known from whatever source of God, the World and Man! Such an ideal is surely wanted in days when Theology is in some danger of sinking into the mere antiquarianism, or the mere literary criticism, which are, of course, among the most important of its bases and its instruments.

The new truth which now demands to be adjusted with the old truth is not the same as the new truth of the 12th or the 13th century. Darwinism and historical criticism are to us what the awakening of dialectical activity was to

Abelard, and the re-discovery of a lost Aristotle to Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas. The re-statement—let us say boldly the re-construction—of Christian doctrine is the great intellectual task upon which the Church of our day is just entering, and with which it must go on boldly if Christianity is to retain its hold on the intellect as well as the sentiment and the social activities of our time. And, depend upon it, the Church that has lost its hold of the first will not long retain its control of the last. In that great task the reverent study of the past is an essential element. As an age awakens to new spiritual needs, it often finds that its wants have been to a great extent anticipated, though undoubtedly the old truth can only be rescued from oblivion by becoming something different from what it was before. No two ages can ever see exactly alike. In this re-construction of Christian Theology, I am convinced that we have something to learn from the scholastic Theologians, and most of all perhaps from the first, the greatest, the most modern of them all. Partly for this reason—as an illustration of what we may learn from him—I have ventured to speak of Abelard's doctrine of the Atonement, but still more because I believe it to be as noble and as perspicuous a statement as can even yet be found of the faith which is still the life of Christendom.

H. RASHDALL.

THE CHRONOLOGY OF EZRA IV. 6-23.

II.

WE now turn to that other passage in the interesting Book of Ezra, which has been a source of perplexity to commentators, and has led to some untenable hypotheses. We will first describe the position; then state the hypotheses by which it has been attempted to get over the difficulties, and show them to be impossible. And lastly,