

there can be no question as to the sense in which Abraham understood it. We read in ver. 3 that he "clave the wood for the burnt-offering." In ver. 6 he "took the wood of the burnt-offering . . . and the fire in his hand and a knife." Clearly, then, he understood that the victim was to be slain, and the sacrifice to be by fire. Isaac understood the command of God in the same sense, "Behold the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt-offering?" (ver. 7). Vers.

8, 9, 10 tell us the same thing. Abraham built an altar, laid the wood in order, bound his son, laid him upon the altar, took the knife to slay his son, and finally offered up the ram "for a burnt-offering instead of his son."

Moreover, the Divine approbation of Abraham's act in ver. 12, "Now I know that thou lovest God," shows decisively that Abraham did not misunderstand the Divine command.

J. J. S. WORCESTER.

## Mr. Gore on the Incarnation.

BY THE REV. PROFESSOR IVERACH, D.D., ABERDEEN.

MR. GORE has written a most fascinating book. It has many qualities worthy of the highest admiration. A clear and lucid style; ample and adequate learning; earnest, enthusiastic, and reasoned conviction; and orderly arrangement of topics, have combined to the production of a work which will take a place not merely in theology, but in literature. Mr. Gore has won his way to, and easily holds, the foremost place in the school to which he belongs. His work has great and obvious merits, it also has grave defects. Some chapters we can read with frank sympathy and admiration; others with restraint and some dissent; and others with a dissent which is nearly absolute. The first two chapters are admirable. Mr. Gore has indeed done splendid service in his statement of what Christianity is: "Christianity is absolute faith in a certain person, Jesus Christ, and it loses its character when the relationship to a person is obscured." Mr. Gore has enumerated some of the causes which in his view tend to obscure the consciousness of a relationship to a person, but we do not think his summary complete, as we shall seek to show later. The argument of the second chapter is splendidly conducted. It is an attempt to show that Christ is "supernatural yet natural." Here Mr. Gore makes good use of the scientific conception of nature, and takes advantage of the view that nature is a growth and an organism. Nature has been not only uniform, it has been progressive, and may be looked at as a progressive revelation of God. The order of nature is incomplete without Christ, but with Christ it is a complete revelation of the moral character of God. As moral nature is "supernatural" from the

point of view of what is merely physical, so Christ is "supernatural" from the point of view of an incomplete nature. Nature, however, was not merely incomplete: in the natural world were the ravages of sin, and therefore Christ is not only the consummation of nature: He is also its restoration. Miracles in the case of Christ are the natural phenomena of His unexampled nature. As nature on each new level exhibits new phenomena, so in the case of Christ there are new phenomena, and the new phenomena are not violations of nature, but indications of its true divine order.

The third chapter, which deals with "the supernatural Christ historical," is satisfactory so far. It summarises fairly and ably the evidence of Paul's central Epistles, of Mark's Gospel, of the preface to Luke's Gospel, and of the Fourth Gospel. But it is defective in that Mr. Gore has not dealt, in any adequate manner, with the views afloat at the present time. There is no reference to the views of such men as Keim, Carpenter, Martineau. Mr. Gore ought to have said something as to the traces which Keim professes to find in the New Testament of "successive exaltations of the human dignity of Jesus," and some space might have been given to a criticism of the various attempts made to show that the historical Christ is not a supernatural Christ. We do not find fault with what he has done. The historical evidence is summarised in a way worthy of all admiration; but why has he no reference to Keim's contention that there are three stages of opinion manifest in the Gospels themselves with regard to the origin of Jesus Christ—(1) that of a purely human birth; (2) that of a miraculous

birth, and (3) that of pre-existence? He ought also to have shown that he is aware of the various attempts made to prove that the Church invented the dogmatic Christ. Such works as Carpenter's *Synoptic Gospels* and Martineau's *Seat of Authority*—not to speak of others—ought to have been dealt with.

It is when we pass to the following chapters that we find Mr. Gore's treatment of the subject most inadequate. It is not that his dealing with the question is lacking in felicity of phrase, or in any way devoid of knowledge, or deficient in reverence. What we are disposed to think inadequate is his assumption that the dogma of the creeds is a sufficient account of the person of Christ, and that no fresh attempt is to be made to construe the doctrine afresh in the light of an increased knowledge both of the Scriptures and of man. Mr. Gore affirms "that the Christ of dogma is the Christ of Scripture," and the dogma for him is contained in the formula of Chalcedon. He is surely aware of the difficulty felt by the theologians of Germany with regard to that formula. Dorner speaks thus in his description of the progress of modern theology: "With respect to *Christology*, it is *Christ's true humanity* which has with special zeal and success been kept in view. This has been done both from an ethical motive, and for the sake of implanting in His believing Church a more vivid conception of His Person. Hence the doctrine—frequently advocated in older divinity, though expressed in no Church symbol—of the non-personality of the human nature of Christ has been generally given up. The human conflict and struggles of Christ and His real human development have also been more strictly kept in view, for the sake of a more just appreciation both of His example and of the value of His merits" (*History of Protestant Theology*, vol. ii. p. 457). Readers of Dorner's great work on *The Person of Christ* will readily recollect how he dwells on the unsatisfactory character of a supposed "impersonal" human nature; and those acquainted with his *System of Christian Doctrine* will remember his own attempt to construct a satisfactory statement of the doctrine of the person of Christ, a statement which we need not describe or criticise here.

It is true indeed that the formula of Chalcedon has been part of the creed of Christendom for nearly sixteen centuries. It is true also that its function has been mainly negative, as Mr. Gore

has said: "Certain interpretations of the old faith had been suggested, calculated to undermine its foundations, and the Church met them with a negative. Test-words, selected to embody these negatives, were adopted to guard the old faith, without adding to it, by simply blocking off false lines of development on this side or on that." In the fulfilment of this negative office, may not the creed have blocked off certain lines of development which might have been fruitful? May not the creed have gone beyond the warrant of Scripture? Mr. Gore does not seem to have looked at the possibility of questions such as these. But surely the strenuous labours of believing German theologians, of whom Dorner may be taken as a type, deserved some recognition at his hands. How great these labours have been, how fruitful and suggestive need not here be said. If Dorner can truly say that the doctrine of the non-personality of the human nature of Christ has been generally given up by theologians who believe in the God-man, and who revere the Scriptures and their authority, surely that affords a presumption that the Christ of Scripture cannot be identified with the Christ of dogma as completely as Mr. Gore demands. We must keep in mind that the dogma of Mr. Gore is always that of the Nicene and the Athanasian Creeds. If we identify the Christ of Scripture with the Christ of that dogma, what are we to say of those theologians who have reopened the question, and who seem to have reopened it to some purpose?

Mr. Gore seems to assume as the starting-point of the development of dogma the whole of the New Testament writings. He seems to think that these had been perfectly assimilated by the early Church. For he blames Dr. Hatch because he has not examined the theology of the New Testament. He asks, "Is there theology in St. Paul, St. John, and even St. James? Does that theology represent or misrepresent the religion of Jesus Christ? These questions are not considered. Is the theology of the Nicene Creed any more metaphysical, or any more technical, than the theology of St. Paul or St. John? This question is again not considered. Now it seems to me that a book written about the development of Christian theology, which omits any real examination of the New Testament writers, is like a work written to account for the later French empire which should omit any serious consideration of the great Napoleon"

(p. 100). The meaning is plain. Mr. Gore would have us begin the history of the development of dogma with an examination of the New Testament. On this point we shall let Principal Rainy speak: "It is very commonly taken for granted, in a general way, that if there is such a thing as legitimate development, the starting-point must be the completed revelation as delivered by apostolic men. As soon as this is assumed, all the difficulties are at once present in full force. How can the completed revelation (whether recorded in Scripture alone, or partly preserved by tradition too) be a complete and adequate rule of faith, if it serves only as the point of departure of a development that was to fill all future history? . . . But the truth is, that the development does not start from the completed revelation; that would be a lofty starting-point indeed. It starts from the measure of understanding which the Church had of the revelation at the time when apostolic guidance ended; it starts from the measure of attainment in knowledge of the meaning, scope, and connection of the truth; from the thoughts and specially the clear thoughts which the Church then had of the truth set forth in apostolic teaching, and embodied with other elements in the Scriptures" (*Delivery and Development of Doctrine*, pp. 184, 185). If this be so, then clearly Mr. Gore's demand that Dr. Hatch should have begun with the "consideration of the theology of the apostolic writers" is unreasonable. Perhaps Dr. Hatch did provoke such a demand by his reference to the Sermon on the Mount, and by his comparison of it with the Nicene Creed, and the consequences which he drew from that comparison. Apart from that, however, Dr. Hatch set about a work of historical research in the only competent way. To show us the influences under which the early Church lived and moved; what the usual training and education of the Greek and Roman world were; what was the circle of ideas in which their thoughts revolved; and to find out from this inquiry what preconceptions, presuppositions, and mental attitudes they brought to the facts of Christianity, was clearly a legitimate inquiry, and it has been splendidly done by Dr. Hatch. He has told us what were the "Greek ideas and usages" which were dominant during the early ages of Christianity, and how these exercised their influences on early Christian thought, as all can readily see who studies the works of Justin Martyr or the works of theologians of Alexandria.

Mr. Gore scarcely recognises the fact of how ignorant the early Fathers were of the theology of the New Testament, and he ignores the other fact that the New Testament, the history and the theology contained in it, were never so well known as they are at the present hour. Nor does he seem to recognise how the problems discussed in the Greek schools of theology were problems set to the Church by Greek philosophy, and Greek views of man, of the world, and of God. He says: "The Greek language was in fact fitted, as none other ever has been, to furnish an exact and permanent terminology for doctrinal purposes. The ideas of substance or thing, of personality, of nature, are permanent ideas; we cannot get rid of them; no better words could be suggested to express the same facts: the same creeds have been found equally dear to the heart of Greek and Roman and Teuton, in the age of Greek philosophy, in the age of mediæval barbarism, among the scholastic philosophers, in the modern nations since the Reformation." Will Mr. Gore, on reflection, assert that the ideas of substance, of personality, of nature were the same to a Greek philosopher, to a schoolman, as to a modern German? Are there any words which have more changed in meaning than these very words he names? If Greek philosophy failed in anything, it failed in its doctrine of man and in its conception of personality. And the language in which the creeds are couched bear traces of problems discussed, and speculations carried on for many centuries in Greek and Roman circles.

Every student of Church history and of the development of doctrine has felt something of a surprise and of a shock when he passes from the study of Greek to the study of Latin theology. The two form a contrast both with regard to the problems they have attacked, and to the means used for their solution. Broadly, the contrast is that Greek theology was largely metaphysical, while Roman theology was mainly legal. "It is conceded on all sides that the earliest language of the Christian Church was Greek, and that the problems to which it first addressed itself were those for which Greek philosophy, in its later forms, had prepared the way. . . . The Western Church threw itself with passionate ardour into a new order of disputes, the same which from those days to this have never lost their interest for any family of mankind at any time included in the Latin communion.

The nature of sin and its transmission by inheritance, the debt owed by man and its vicarious satisfaction, the necessity and sufficiency of the Atonement—above all, the apparent antagonism between free-will and the Divine Providence—these were the points which the West began to debate as ardently as ever the East had discussed the articles of its more special creed. Why is it, then, that the two sides of the line which divides the Greek-speaking from the Latin-speaking provinces there lie two classes of theological problems so strikingly different from one another? The historians of the Church have come close upon the solution when they remark that the new problems were more 'practical,' less absolutely speculative, than those which had torn Eastern Christianity asunder; but none of them, so far as I am aware, has quite reached it. I affirm, without hesitation, that the difference between the two theological systems is accounted for by the fact that, in passing from the East to the West, theological speculation had passed from a climate of Greek metaphysics to a climate of Roman law" (Maine's *Ancient Law*, pp. 355-357). It is striking to notice how Mr. Gore treats those parts of the creed of the Church of England which have been influenced by Greek metaphysics, and those parts which, according to the statement we have just quoted, have been influenced by Roman law. We may take the Thirty-nine Articles as forming part of the creed of the Church of England. Yet Mr. Gore has no hesitation in setting forth a doctrine of justification which seems to be quite inconsistent with the plain meaning of the Articles. In other respects, also, Mr. Gore writes as if those creeds, or statements of doctrine, which are binding on the Christian, were formulated in the first four or five centuries, and that all subsequent developments of doctrine, though embodied in authoritative documents by all the Churches of the Reformation, have no binding force. We ask why? Did the teaching function of the Church cease when the "Three Creeds" had been drawn up? On what principle are we to distinguish between the earlier and the later creeds? Are we to go back and test their truth by an appeal to Scripture? Then an appeal to Scripture is as competent in the case of the "Three Creeds" as in the case of the Thirty-nine Articles. And we have to be on our guard against being influenced by Greek metaphysics, against being influenced by Roman law, and

against being influenced by any philosophy whatsoever.

It is not too much to say that the theology of every age has been influenced by its philosophy. The spirit of the age makes itself manifest in all the forms of its activity, and we must be watchful lest we make a passing phase of philosophical opinion a permanent element in the Christian Creed. It is possible that there has entered even into the Nicene Creed an element due more to transient Greek metaphysics than to permanent Christian truth. We shall not affirm off-hand that such is the case, but we may again refer to the statement of Dorner on this point.

We are disappointed to find no reference in these lectures to the most subtle form of objection to the Christian Creed which has ever appeared. If we mistake not, it is the mode of opposition which we shall find to be most injurious, just because it is most subtle and most refined. It is also another illustration of the influence which philosophy has on theology. Mr. Gore is no doubt aware of it, as he actually quotes the paper of Professor Green in which the question of Christian dogma is discussed. He quotes the passage in which Professor Green says "one need not be an orthodox Trinitarian to see that if Arianism had had its way the theology of Christianity would have become a kind in which no philosopher, who had outgrown the demonism of ancient systems, could for a moment acquiesce." But he does not deal with Professor Green's theory whereby the historical and real Christ vanishes, and only an idea is left behind. Any work on the Incarnation, if it is to be adequate, must deal with such views as those of Green. Let me quote one passage: "Christian dogma, then, must be retained in its completeness, but it must be transformed into a philosophy." Its first characteristic, as an intuition become abstract, must vanish, that it may be assimilated by the reason as an idea. The progress of thought in general consists in its struggle to work itself free from the mere individuality and outwardness of the object of intuition. The thing as sensible, *i.e.* as presented in an individual moment of time and space, must become the thing as known, *i.e.* as constituted by general attributes. Again, from being known so far as it exists, it must be understood also to exist only so far as it is known. Christ, as an object of intuition, must undergo a similar process. To the

twelve apostles He was a visible person, and as such a Saviour of the Jews only. By St. Paul He was known under these attributes which Gentile (at least Alexandrian) philosophy had learned to ascribe to the spirit or wisdom of the world, and as such He became the Christ of the Gentiles. These attributes, however, were still referred to the historical Jesus. He was the reality of which the idea involving the attributes was the objective reflex. To the modern philosopher the idea itself was the reality. To him Christ is the necessary determination of the eternal subject, the objectification by this subject of Himself in the world of nature and humanity. At first sight the two modes of apprehension might seem mutually exclusive. If the idea of the philosopher is the truth, it may be said the intuition of the philosopher must be delusion" (Green's *Works*, vol. iii. pp. 182, 183). We need not point out the inaccuracy of Green's statements with regard to the twelve apostles and to St. Paul. Speculative power does not of itself involve an accurate knowledge of history. Our aim in giving this quotation is to show in what sense Mr. Gore's quotation from Green is to be understood, and to ask why Mr. Gore has not dealt with that phase of opinion which, seeming to concede the truth of the Incarnation, makes it simply a step in the necessary determination of the eternal subject? Nor is Professor Green alone in this view. We find similar statements in the writings of others of the British Hegelian school. Nor is it confined to the Hegelians. Others there are who look at the doctrine of the Trinity "as a rational and sublime theory of the universe,—God in nature, God in history, God in the individual"; and at the Incarnation as an idea which is not true of any individual, but is true of the race. What would Mr. Gore say to such a statement as that of Max Müller, in his latest series of Gifford Lectures: "To the Greeks divine sonship would have meant no more than a miraculous, a mythological event, such as the birth of Hercules. Christ spoke a new language—a language liable no doubt to be misunderstood, as all language is; but a language which, to those who understood it, has imparted a new glory to the face of the whole world. It is well known how this event, the discovery of the divine in man, which involves a complete change in the spiritual condition of mankind, and marks the great turning-point in the history of the world, has been surrounded by a

legendary halo, has been obscured, has been changed into a mere mythology, so that its real meaning has often been quite forgotten, and has to be discovered again by honest and fearless seeking" (*Anthropological Religion*, p. 380). It is impossible to enumerate, and certainly it is impossible here to criticise, views of the same kind which appear from time to time in various organs of opinion. But it does seem as if the great battle of the immediate future will be against such theories as these—theories which seem to accept the facts in a sense, and which yet explain them away altogether.

Knowing these things, and feeling that all the forces of Christendom are needed in order to conserve that Christianity—which is absolute faith in a person Jesus Christ, as Mr. Gore has well described, a Christianity which is as precious to a Presbyterian as to an Episcopalian, valued as highly by all sections of the Church of Christ as it is by the High Anglican party,—it is as disappointing as it is distressing to find that the discussion of this great theme degenerates in the concluding chapter till it becomes a mere occasion for the writing of an Anglican manifesto. It is scarcely possible to get an Anglican to forget his provincialism, or to hinder him from making the private shibboleth of his party the very note and mark of the kingdom of God. He presses it in season and out of season, and always finds or makes an occasion for its introduction. "Apostolic succession and an historical continuity" are sure to come in somewhere. The Church becomes an "extension of the Incarnation." What is implied and involved in these statements we find when we turn to Mr. Gore's work, *The Church and the Ministry*, in which he informs us that "their authority to minister in whatever capacity, their qualifying consecration, was to come from above, in such sense that no ministerial act could be regarded as valid—that is, as having the security of the divine covenant about it—unless it was performed under the shelter of a commission, received by the transmission of the original pastoral authority, which had been delegated by Christ Himself to His apostles" (p. 71); and that we may clearly know what this means, we have the following (p. 345): "It follows then, not that God's grace has not worked, and worked largely, through many an irregular ministry, where it was exercised or used in good faith, but that a ministry not episcopally received is invalid—that is to say, falls outside the

conditions of covenanted security, and cannot justify its existence in terms of the covenant." This is not the place to discuss this vexed question, nor to remind Mr. Gore that he speaks not in the name of the whole Church of England, but only in the name of a section thereof; nor can we speak here of the high value which other Churches attach to the Word and Sacraments as Means of Grace. We shall not animadvert on the manner in which he attempts to displace faith from its central position as the unique condition of salvation—"He that believes hath everlasting life,"—nor criticise the function he assigns to faith as an adjunct and

derivative from the apostolic succession and the sacraments. We can only express our regret that a great and reasonable and worthy discussion, which began so well, and maintained its dignity and worthiness for so long a time, should at last have disappeared in the morass of sacerdotalism. But, in truth, this notion of the Church seems to be the central idea in the mind of Mr. Gore, and he is unable to get away from it. The consequence is, that a book which promised to be a boon to Christendom, turns out in the end to be a mere plea for High Churchism of the more recent type.

## Some Difficult Passages in St. Paul's Epistles.

BY THE REV. PROFESSOR J. AGAR BEET, D.D., RICHMOND.

### I.

"Thought it not robbery to be equal with God."—PHIL. ii. 6.

In order to understand the significance of the words thus rendered in the English Authorised Version, we ask (1) the meaning of the verb ἀρπάζω, (2) the meaning of the derived substantive ἀρπαγμός, (3) the meaning of the whole clause.

1. The root of the verb is correctly given in Dr. Ellicott's rendering "seized on or grasped at." It always means to take hold with a strong hand of something not yet in our hand. So John vi. 15, "Seize Him, that they may make Him king;" Acts viii. 39, "The Spirit of the Lord snatched away Philip;" 2 Cor. xii. 2, 4, "Caught up even to the third heaven." Forcible seizure is often unjust. But the above examples prove that injustice is no part of the idea conveyed by the word.

2. Of the derived form ἀρπαγμός, Dr. Ellicott says that "the usual force of its termination would seem to denote 'the act of seizing.'" And he quotes one passage, perhaps the only one outside Christian literature in which the word is used, in which it indisputably has this active sense. This meaning, however, which is at once suggested by the form of the word, he sets aside as unsuitable to the context; and expounds the word to mean, "a thing to be seized on," thus making it equivalent to ἀρπαγμα. But he does not suggest why St. Paul refused a common word which conveys exactly the sense he wished to convey, and selected a very rare word which at once suggests another meaning.

Having set aside the ordinary meaning of the termination of the word used by St. Paul, Dr. Ellicott silently alters the meaning conveyed by the root of the word. After assuming that the root idea of the word is to *seize* or *grasp*, he goes on to expound it to mean *retain as a prize*. So far as I can understand him, he means that the Son did not hold fast His equality with God, but gave it up. This meaning, thus silently slipped into the passage, the word ἀρπάζω and its derivatives never have. They denote always to lay hold of something not yet in our grasp. In no sense can the Son either grasp, or refuse to grasp, equality with God. For it is already His by an eternal and inalienable possession. Of the meaning which, somewhat furtively, Dr. Ellicott gives to the word, viz. to *hold fast* something already in our hands, he gives no example. And I believe that none can be found. That it means to *lay hold of* something not yet in our grasp, is assumed by Chrysostom in his exposition of the passage; and upon this meaning of the word an argument is based.

3. Another difficulty in Dr. Ellicott's exposition is that it implies that Christ did lay aside His equality with God. This I cannot admit; certainly not till I have proof clearer than the passage before us. Even after He had emptied Himself and had laid aside for a time and for our salvation the form of God in which He had previ-