

ill at ease. Life becomes darkened, and the universe a hopeless puzzle. The man feels that reconciliation with his God is needful to the adjustment and satisfaction of his moral nature. The sin is confessed, and the sacrifice offered as an outward and emphatic symbol of the feeling within. Will God accept the offering, forgive the sin, and relieve the soul? This seems to be the simple and natural theory of the sin offering. Scarcely any subject connected with religion has been more confused, and complicated by theological discussion, than this one of sacrifice. The amount of learning, ingenuity and patience that has been expended upon it has been immense, and, as it seems to me, mainly to the darkening of counsel. Whatever may be the interest of such discussions to the student of opinion, to the simple religious soul they bring but little profit. With respect, again, to the thank offerings, or sacrifices of thanksgiving, what can be more natural and fit than they? Man finds himself in a world of mystery, beauty and bounty. Sky above him, and earth beneath minister to his enjoyment. He feels himself dependent, and in his best and most deeply meditative hours his soul dilates with gratitude to the source of such varied gifts and mercies. He is thankful, profoundly thankful, and he takes of what he has received and makes a visible offering which symbolises the state of his mind and heart.

In the Mosaic economy of religion we find the practice of sacrifice recognized and divinely regulated. Among the Hebrews prior to the giving of the law it was not reduced to any special system. Every man might offer his own sacrifice, though it was generally confided to some person of greater distinction — the head of the family or