

THE PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL REVIEW

VOLUME V

JULY 1907

NUMBER 3

AUGUSTINE'S DOCTRINE OF KNOWLEDGE AND AUTHORITY.

Augustine marks almost as great an epoch in the history of philosophy as in the history of theology. It was with him that the immediate assurance of consciousness first took its place as the source and warrant of truth. No doubt there had been a long preparation for the revolution which was wrought by his announcement of the principle of "self-assured subjectivity", as Windelband calls it, and his establishment of it in "the controlling central position of philosophic thought". But the whole preceding development will not account for the act of genius by which he actually shifted the basis of philosophy, and in so doing became "the true teacher of the middle ages", no doubt, but above and beyond that "one of the founders of modern thought".¹ He may himself be said to have come out of Plato, or Plotinus; but in even a truer sense out of him came Descartes and his successors.² When he urged men to cease seeking truth without them, and to turn within, since the home of truth

¹ Windelband, *A History of Philosophy*, E. T., pp. 276, 264, 270.

² Leder, *Augustins Erkenntnistheorie*, p. 76: "If we must see in Plotinus the father of Augustine's Platonism, we may yet recognize it as an especially original service of the Church-Father, that he established over against all scepticism the first point of all certitude in self-consciousness. He found in Plotinus no guidance for this: rather by an act of genius he anticipated in it the line of thought which Descartes (1640) made in his *Meditationes* the starting point of his expositions."

The historicity of the Fourth Gospel is surrendered on the ground of the discrepancy between it and Mark and also because this Gospel is held to be ideal history. The resurrection of Lazarus could not have happened because Mark is silent about it, showing that he did not know of it. Again, the silence of the Fourth Gospel about the Eucharist can only be regarded as deliberate, and the transference of the Eucharist teaching of Jesus from the last supper to the earlier Galilean miracle is an equally deliberate sacrificing of historical truth. A similar judgment is passed on the teaching of the Fourth Gospel about Baptism and the Ministry of Jesus. In its account of Jesus' discussion with the Jews "there is an argumentativeness, a tendency to mystification, about the utterances of the Johannine Christ which, taken as the report of actual words spoken, is positively repellent" (p. 227). "The only possible explanation is that the work is not history, but something else cast in an historical form" (p. 228). The Church, however, accepted this Gospel because it expressed the belief of the Church about the person of Christ. "The Christ of the Fourth Gospel is not the Christ of history, but the Christ of experience" seen *sub specie aeternitatis* (p. 230). Nevertheless, the emphasis placed on the real incarnation, death and resurrection of Jesus separates the Jesus of the Fourth Gospel from the Jesus of Gnostic speculation. Moreover, the disputes of Jesus with the Jews contain historical elements. But the real object of the Evangelist was "the deliberate substitution of other ideals for the expected coming of the Messiah on the clouds of heaven" (p. 243). Mr. Burkitt connects the Gospel with a Jew of Jerusalem, either directly or indirectly, and on the evidence of the de Boor fragment and the Syriac Martyrology favors the distinction between the John of Ephesus and the Apostle John. "The Fourth Gospel is written to prove the reality of Jesus Christ. But the Evangelist was no historian: ideas, not events, were to him the true realities, and if we go to his work to learn the course of events we shall only be disappointed in our search" (p. 256.)

The remaining chapters are devoted to, the Gospel Canon; Marcion or Christianity without a History; and the Rivals of the Canonical Gospels. Mr. Burkitt conceives of the Four Gospels as attaining to canonicity because they satisfied the Church's requirements. Marcion was the first to canonize the New Testament (p. 319). Mr. Burkitt's conception of the origin of the New Testament Canon depends much on the argument from silence and neglects the evidence of the New Testament itself.

Princeton.

WILLIAM P. ARMSTRONG.

PAULINE AND OTHER STUDIES IN EARLY CHRISTIAN HISTORY. By W. M. RAMSAY, Hon.D.C.L., etc., Professor of Humanity in the University of Aberdeen. New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son, 3 and 5 West Eighteenth St. 1906. \$3.00 net.

Professor Ramsay is best known to New Testament students as the sturdy defender of the historical character of the Acts and the

brilliant protagonist of the South-Galatian theory. He appears in both of these roles in the interesting essays now collected under the title of *Pauline and other Studies*. It is refreshing to hear from a layman, who is at the same time a trained geographer and historian, that "the practical man, and the scholar who studies antiquities for their own sake, will always find Acts a first-hand and luminous authority". The main topics treated are the conversion, personality and statesmanship of Paul; the influence of paganism upon the Church in Asia Minor; and the authorship, trustworthiness and chronology of Acts. Incidentally, Professor Ramsay defends Paul's philosophy of religion in Romans i, and tells the curious story of a vision by an uneducated German woman of the house near Ephesus where the Virgin Mary had lived, and the discovery some fifty years later (in 1891) by a priest of Smyrna of a house corresponding almost exactly in appearance and location, to the one described.

The first chapter, "Shall We Hear Evidence or Not?" is a strong plea for an open-minded examination of the evidence for an appearance to Paul of the living Lord. A vigorous protest is made against the tendency to assume at the outset that Paul's vision was due to some kind of mental unsoundness. Paul not only convinced those who heard him that he was sane and spoke the truth, but "he has moved the world, changed the whole course of history, and made us what we are. Is the world moved at the word of a lunatic? To think so would be to abandon all belief in the existence of order and unity in the world and in history".

Professor Ramsay reminds us several times that he could never accept the Acts as reliable history till he came to see that it could be interpreted in accordance with the South-Galatian theory. He plainly intimates that the historicity of Acts and the South-Galatian theory must stand or fall together, and warns us that we must accept the latter, together with the identification of the visits of Gal. ii. and Acts xi., under pain of being thrown into the arms of the Tübingen critics. We are by no means convinced that the general question of the reliability of Acts and the special question of the direction of Paul's journeys are necessarily bound up together as closely as the development of Ramsay's opinion might suggest. He himself has shown so broadly that "Paul and Luke stand together", and by his splendid appreciation of the Apostle and his testing of Luke at so many points he has made us recognize so "absolutely and irresistibly and forever that Luke had known the man, had been his friend and confidant and coadjutor", that the weight of his testimony will be felt even by those who cannot accept favorite theories.

The longest essay in the book is that on the statesmanship of Paul. The main thesis is that Paul's declaration before the council, "I am a Pharisee, son of Pharisees", was meant by the speaker to emphasize the political and not the religious points of agreement between himself and the Pharisaic party. Thus interpreted the words "stand forth as the sharpest and most comprehensive statement that has come down

to us from him about his work and his plans". He meant that his supreme purpose was the spiritual conquest of the Roman Empire, as over against the Sadducean policy of compromise and accommodation. If Paul was asserting his religious agreement with the Pharisees, it is said that he was adopting a device not consistent with perfect straightforwardness of character. If he had a political policy in mind, however, "he was asserting the continuity of his mental development from first to last". Professor Ramsay admits that Luke's account ("of the hope and resurrection of the dead, etc.") is "so expressed as to lend itself readily to the commonly accepted view"; and he even allows that Luke himself, who was a Jew and did not understand the Jews, may possibly have so interpreted Paul's words; but he is not deterred thereby from a confident defense of his own interpretation. The essay is valuable for its wealth of learning, its dialectical skill and the light which it sheds upon Paul's farseeing missionary policy; but when we turn again to Paul's own words, Acts xxiii. 6, and his repetition of them, xxiv. 21 ("I cried among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead, etc."), it is so evident that Paul was thinking of the religious doctrine of the Pharisees and not of their attitude toward the Roman state, that with reference to our author's thesis we are tempted to exclaim, "Much learning has made thee mad".

It is safe to say that Professor Ramsay has done more than any other living writer to stimulate interest in the Acts and to strengthen confidence in its historical accuracy. That a brilliant historical student, a layman, and an admirer of the Tübingen views, should come by the way of purely historical investigation to recognize in Luke an historian of the first rank, is in itself an argument whose force can be felt by those who are unable to enter into the subtleties of critical discussion. The views which such a scholar holds cannot be laughed out of court. Interesting here is what Professor Ramsay says of Lightfoot: "The quality in Lightfoot's work that most impressed me was his transparent honesty, his obvious straining to understand and represent every person's opinion with scrupulous fairness. In him I was for the first time conscious of coming in contact with a mind that was educated, thoughtful, trained in scholarship, perfectly straight and honest, and yet able to accept simply the New Testament in the old-fashioned way. . . . The combination had previously seemed to me impossible in our age, though possible at an earlier time; and its occurrence in Lightfoot set me to rethinking the grounds of my own position."

The volume is handsomely printed and bound, with a map of the Pauline world and numerous illustrations.

Lincoln University, Pa.

WILLIAM HALLOCK JOHNSON.

THE CREED OF CHRIST. A Study in the Gospels. By RICHARD VENABLE LANCASTER. Richmond, Va. The Presbyterian Committee of Publication. 1905. 12 mo. pp. 206.

This is as unpretentious a little volume as it is an excellent one. Mr. Lancaster makes no pretense of having discovered a new Christ; or any-