

# The Princeton Theological Review

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## DARIUS THE MEDE

It is about six years since my first volume of *Studies in the Book of Daniel* was published; and now that the second volume is about to appear, it seems like an opportune time to reply to some of the criticisms of the reviewers of the first. The most elaborate of the criticisms was one by Professor Kemper Fullerton of the Oberlin Graduate School of Theology which appeared in the Bulletin of my alma mater, the Western Theological Seminary, at Allegheny, Pa., for October 1918. Had Professor Fullerton's criticism been confined to myself, I would have forever held my peace; but inasmuch as I am merely the occasion for a violent onslaught on the veracity of the book of Daniel, I shall be excused for referring at length to his strictures. It is high praise, though intended as blame, to be spoken of by him as a "bringer-up-to-date" of the work of such men as Hengstenberg, Keil, Pusey and Green, with whom I am classed as a belated example of the same anti-critical animus and unscientific method.

And, first, let me say, that I do not deem it a reproach to have produced "a typical example of the harmonistic method," which is one of the most serious charges brought against me by Professor Fullerton; but that I fail to see that I have used this method as distinct from the "historical" method, whatever that means. Words break no bones, it may be; but since Professor Fullerton evidently aims to put me in the wrong at the very start and, by necessary implication, all through my studies, by affirming that in my method I am harmonistic as distinct from historical, it is well to pause just here in order to come to an understanding

## HISTORICAL THEOLOGY

*Christianity in History. A Study of Religious Development.* By J. VERNON BARTLET, M.A., D.D. (St. Andr.), Senior Tutor of Mansfield College, Oxford, and A. J. CARLYLE, M.A., D.Litt., Lecturer, Late Fellow, of University College, Oxford. London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1917. Pp. xix, 613.

"This work more than most," the authors inform us, "needs some words of preface touching its scope. For it is a venture on rather novel lines. It is not a history of the Christian Church, nor again a sketch of the development of Christian doctrine, for instance, like Allen's *Continuity of Christian Thought*. It comes somewhere midway between the two, being less complete and concrete than the former, more manysided than the latter." The statement continues: "Ours is in fact an attempt to set forth the genesis and growth of certain of the more typical forms and phases which Christianity—whether as conduct, piety, thought, or organized Church life—has assumed under the conditioning influences first of the Roman Empire and then of the Western civilisation that was its successor and heir. . . . Such a work necessarily involves much selection and omission; and its resulting perspective cannot but have about it a large subjective element." And certainly fairness requires the reviewer constantly to bear in mind this specific purpose of the authors, lest he too often yield to the temptation of finding fault with the treatise for what to him may seem, in view of the wide scope of the main title and the broad treatment of certain themes, an unpardonable neglect of some of the elements in the history of Christianity, or, in view of the restrictions suggested by the subtitle, an unwarranted or at least unnecessary introduction of others. But with all due consideration of the precise limits of the task here undertaken, many readers, including even those who, by reason of their special competence to weigh the difficulties involved in making such a selection and estimate of varied historical data, may be credited with the utmost sympathy for the authors in the execution of their plan, will feel constrained to endorse the confession made in the Preface: "Doubtless we have failed, time and again, to settle these questions of periods, proportionate fulness of treatment, inclusion and omission of topics, in a fully satisfactory way."

It may not be amiss, therefore, to take a glance, first of all, at the purely formal aspects of the volume before us. The survey falls into five periods, styled, respectively, The Beginnings, Ancient Christianity, The Middle Ages, The Great Transition, and The Modern Period. Part I (pp. 1-80) gives a succinct account of the origin of Christianity and of its development in the Apostolic Age. By far the largest amount of space (pp. 81-349) is devoted to Part II, on Ancient Christianity, extending to the fall of the Roman Empire in the West. The attempted justification of the admittedly disproportionate treatment of this period is significant for the general attitude of the authors to their task as a whole. No doubt, it may fairly be claimed in the abstract that the "forms" of ancient Catholicism and "their influence have persisted,

without fundamental change, as the main intellectual factor in the general apprehension of Christianity down to the present day." And of course there is even more warrant for the assertion that in the Middle Ages "the further developments were in many cases [Would it not be truer to say "in nearly all cases"?] elaborative rather than creative, and so of secondary moment, especially for later times." But in the concrete, these propositions have led to a serious underestimating of the religious and also the theological significance of the Reformation. That Protestantism has retained many of the characteristic elements of the Christianity of the Middle Ages (Part III, pp. 351-462), no one can doubt; and it must be admitted that the fact has not always been adequately recognized by some of the older historians of the Church. It may be conceded, too, that there are obvious advantages in bringing the preparatory movements of the fifteenth century, as is here done, into formal as well as organic connection with the outbreak of the revolt against Rome in the sixteenth; for the forces that were disintegrating the medieval system from the time of the Avignon exile of the papacy largely determined the character of early Protestantism. Nor is there any serious objection to calling the Reformation, provided its basal religious significance as an evangelical revival is duly emphasized, "The Great Transition" (Part IV, pp. 463-526); for few indeed are the periods in history to which such a designation is not in some sense applicable: even Adam, some one has ventured to remark, consoled his helpmeet, on the occasion of their expulsion from the garden of Eden, with the reflection, "We must remember, Eve, that we are living in an age of transition." But the fact is that neither in its geographical expansion, nor yet in its creative force and directive influence, does the Reformation, in the scant consideration here given it in two brief chapters, appear in its essential greatness and its true proportions. This is all the more to be regretted in view of the manifest endeavor to show how deeply and widely the papal Church was affected by the religious awakening. Indeed, the final impression that the reader receives from the treatment of the Reformation as a whole is that "both Catholics and Protestants in the sixteenth century," to use the words of the authors' own verdict, "still thought for the most part, and almost to an equal degree, in terms of the same traditional categories." Part V, on The Modern Period (pp. 527-606), devotes five chapters to the following subjects: New Ideas of Nature and Human Reason: Rationalism; The Revival of Religion in the Eighteenth Century; The Romantic Movement and the Catholic Revival; The Nineteenth Century; The Present Situation.

From the point of view of an American reader the plan of the work is seriously defective in that no allusion whatever is made to Christianity in the Western Hemisphere.

But apart from considerations of form and method of treatment—though, as we have seen, these have at times a necessary principal significance—the volume before us has much to commend it as a series of studies, in chronological order and with some considerable regard to genetic relationships, of some of the most important phases of

historic Christianity. We shall only comment briefly on some of the outstanding features of these discussions.

Frankly acknowledging the super-historical aspects of the problem of primitive Christianity as determined by the person of its Founder, the authors begin with a discriminating account of the Messianic hope of ancient and contemporary Judaism and of the salient characteristics of the "Gospel of the Kingdom." The biblical narratives are accepted as trustworthy sources concerning the person and ministry of Christ; though, in harmony with the theory of many textual critics of to-day, the Gospel of John, while still assigned to the end of the first century, is regarded as being in its present form, not the work of the son of Zebedee, but rather a redaction which a younger disciple of a Hellenistic type of Jewish culture made of the tradition of Christ's life as remembered and taught by the Apostle. Here and there, too, one notes a disposition to make some discount from the full value of the Messianic claims of Jesus as these have been generally understood, particularly in connection with his designation of himself as the "Son of Man" (p. 21f.). But on the whole these introductory chapters, brief as they are, yield a satisfactory interpretation of Christ and his mission, and sketch in admirable fashion the process by which Christianity in the age of the Apostles outgrew its Jewish limitations.

In their account of the missionary expansion of Christianity in the Ante-Nicene period the authors make much use alike of the geographical and of the theological data furnished by Harnack in his classic work on this subject. The fundamental difference between Hebraism and Hellenism is constantly brought to view, and the importance of this distinction for the right valuation of the realistic, quasi-physical and magical sacramentalism that won the field almost completely in the early Church is clearly shown. The development of the Logos Christology is traced in the writings of the chief representatives of the East and the West. The criticisms of the process and the final issues in the formulas sanctioned by the ecumenical councils rightly emphasize the necessity of a more thorough ethicizing of the biblical data and of a more truly experiential understanding of the moral sovereignty of Christ. The treatment of Augustine's contributions to the doctrines of sin and grace properly sets in sharp relief the dualism between the more traditional and the more evangelical elements in his teaching, but reveals no sympathy whatever with the predestinarianism—called "an awful doctrine" (p. 286)—in which Augustine himself grounded his experience and his rationale of the divine mercy. Later (p. 426) the assertion is made that "Augustine's Predestinarianism was more absolute than the Pauline, which it stripped of the qualifications which belonged to it in Paul's Epistles, where it stands in close connection with national election to general acceptance or rejection of the Gospel 'for a season,' and is in any case relative to the privilege of sharing in the Messianic temporal Kingdom, rather than to the individual's final destiny." But what, one is tempted to ask, would Paul think of this attempt to commend his predestinarianism by ignoring its crowning glory? To say the least, would he not regard this

comparison between his view and that of his great disciple of North Africa as a rather doubtful compliment? And would he approve the verdict on Calvin (p. 512), that he made "the absolutism of his theology proper, the 'awful decree' of predestination" stand out "in its native horror for humanity"? No doubt, neither Augustine nor Calvin has given us a satisfactory solution of the problem of the continuity of the sinner's volitional life before and after the entrance of regenerating grace into his soul; but neither do our authors help us to get rid of the difficulty by ignoring its presence in Paulinism itself.

More satisfactory are the chapters on the organization of the ancient Church, with its increasingly hieratic ministry and its sacramental piety. The development of the historic episcopate is set forth with admirable clearness and fairness, from Ignatius to Cyprian, Augustine, and Leo the Great. It is interesting, one may note in passing, to have our Anglican authors testify (p. 305): "Before the middle of the second century we have no evidence that Apostolic authority was thought to devolve on any ministry set up by or with the sanction of the Apostolic Founders of the Church; nor yet that any given method of ordination was of the essence of episcopal office in any local Church." Cyprian is the first to make a strong *jure divino* claim for the bishops as "vicegerents of God or Christ," coupled with the "idea of 'apostolical succession' by ordination" (p. 314).

In presenting the salient features of the Christianity of the Middle Ages (Part III, pp. 351-462), the authors first of all emphasize the cultural superiority of the medieval Church, especially of its missionary leaders, over the barbarians of the North, as compared with the former dependence of the Church on the highly developed civilization of the Graeco-Roman world. Then the further organization of the Church of this period is traced—the growing power of the bishop, the influence of the diocesan and provincial synods, the consolidation of the metropolitan's authority, the growth of the patriarchates, and the rise of the papacy to the height of its prestige under Innocent III. There follows an excellent chapter on the Canon Law which, as grounded in the use and wont of Christians living by the law of nature and the law of God as revealed in the Scriptures, is guarded against various common misapprehensions, and which, as codified in the *Corpus Juris Canonici*, is rightly estimated as one of the most characteristic products of medieval Christianity. The discussion of the relations of Church and State, which in theory were quite simple but in practice thoroughly illogical and nearly always confused—culminating finally in the age-long conflict between the pope and the emperor—offers little that is new or distinctive. We would, however, call attention to an overdrawn statement that certainly needs modification: "with the death of Boniface VIII, in 1303, the medieval system of society passed away" (p. 413). Nor can we agree that "it is at least very doubtful whether we can say that the medieval Papacy formed any deliberate policy of supremacy" (p. 418). No doubt, the Canon Law repudiated such a claim, but a distinction must here be made between papal theory, even as set forth in legal formulas, and

papal practice, as, for instance, in the repeated solicitations of the pontiffs that feudal lords, temporal as well as ecclesiastical, submit disputed cases to the Roman see.

The work of the Schoolmen, in accordance with the principles underlying the plan of this treatise, receives rather scant consideration, but their main contribution to theology, the development of the sacramental system, is well outlined.

We are taking more space than we had intended for this review, and in any event enough has been said to give a fair idea of the scope, content, and method of the volume. As we have intimated, the Reformation is treated almost in a merely episodic manner that fails utterly to show what "Christianity in History" was achieving in those opening decades of the sixteenth century. The authors quote with approval the assertion, which we also accept: "The value of the Reformation is not so much in what it did as in what it made possible." But even so, it merits a much more generous appreciation than is here given it. We still believe, with Harnack and Loofs, as against Troeltsch, that the modern age begins in principle, not with the eighteenth, but with the sixteenth century.

The chapters in Part V may be regarded as a brief introduction to the study of modern Christianity, particularly in its philosophic aspects. The genesis and main characteristics of the Enlightenment, the significance of the Evangelical Revival in England, the service of the Romantic Movement, the leading developments of German and English theology, the social tendencies in contemporary Christian activity, and the forces making for unity of endeavor at home and abroad—all these special phases of the subject are presented in brief outline, though, as in most general histories of the Church, the range and diversity of materials in these centuries make it next to impossible for a mere sketch to give the reader a unitary impression of the story as a whole.

The style of the treatise is for the most part clear, and often quite attractive; but a number of sentences, on account of the ambiguous use of a pronoun or some other infelicity of syntax, must be read more than once, if one is to make sure of the meaning intended. On the other hand, there are many admirable phrases, instructive comparisons and contrasts, and suggestive historical generalizations; and there are some excellent quotations from other authors—which one would often like to locate, but for which no references are given.

*Princeton.*

FREDERICK W. LOETSCHER.

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## SYSTEMATICAL THEOLOGY

*The Return of the Redeemer.* By GEORGE P. ECKMAN. The Abingdon Press. New York and Cincinnati. 1920. Pp. 275.

Dr. Eckman believes that the Scriptures teach that there is to be a visible and glorious return of Christ at the end of the age to raise all