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I. THE LATEST PHASE OF HISTORICAL RATIONALISM.

IN the last number of the QUARTERLY (pp. 36 *et seq.*), we undertook to give some general account of the new historical rationalism which is being now introduced to the American churches by certain enthusiastic pupils of Adolph Harnack; and then, for its better elucidation, began a somewhat fuller exposition of one or two of the more fundamental positions assumed by Dr. A. C. McGiffert in his *Inaugural Address*, in his advocacy of it. We pointed out in that section of our article Dr. McGriffert's conception of Christianity as a development, and gave some account of the "transformations" which he conceives Christianity to have undergone since its origination by Christ. The most important of these "transformations" he represents, certainly with the best of right from his point of view, to be that from the primitive to the Catholic Church, to the better understanding of which his *Address* is devoted. For our better estimation of the significance of his teaching here, we should next consider more closely:

V. DR. MCGIFFERT'S THEORY OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

One of the most striking passages in Dr. McGiffert's *Inaugural Address* is that in which he draws a picture of "primitive Christianity" as it is conceived by him, preliminary to expounding what he calls the momentous "transformation of the primitive into the Catholic Church, of the church of the apostles into that of the old Catholic fathers." That important changes did take place

BUTLER'S "BIBLE WORK."

THE BUTLER BIBLE WORK. *Prepared by J. Glentworth Butler, D. D.* The Old Testament. Vol. VII. 1 Kings xii-xxii., 2 Kings, 2 Chronicles x-xxxvi., Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Isaiah, four Chapters, Jeremiah, eighteen Chapters. Pp. 637. Vol. VIII. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations. Pp. 625. Vol. IX. Ezekiel - Malachi. Pp. 657. The New Testament. Vol. I. The Fourfold Gospel. New York: The Butler Bible Work Company, 85 Bible House. 1894.

These four splendid volumes have been received since our last notice of this work. They bear out fully all that the earlier volumes promised, and justify the praise accorded in advance to the entire series.

Vol. VII., on the Old Testament, embraces such portions of the Old Testament Scriptures as give a complete view of the history of God's people from the division of the kingdom until the return of the remnant of Judah, together with a brief account of the history and literature of the four centuries from Malachi to John. Preliminary to the history, the compiler has given us a collection of valuable thoughts, from the ablest and most evangelical writers, on the relation of the Old and New Testaments as two phases of one revelation, on the historic basis of both Testaments, on the unity and development of the Scriptures, on the structural characteristics of the Old Testament, the order of its books, and the credibility of its history, and on the fact that redemption is the central theme of both Testaments. Following these are testimonies to the truth of the Scriptures drawn from monumental sources. In the next section Dr. Butler gives the views of those authors who maintain the authorship of Kings by Jeremiah, of Chronicles by Ezra. A chronological table of the kingdom, embracing the history of the nations around them, follows. The unfolding of the text is next accomplished in the same manner, by weaving together most skilfully the views of the best known authors and scholars. It is to be noted, with gratification, that Dr. Butler's citations are almost without exception from those who are recognized as conservative, who are not yet ready to give up the old Bible to the new criticism. The section on the inter-Biblical period is drawn almost exclusively from Dr. Blaikie's excellent *Manual of Biblical History*.

Vol. VIII. embraces Isaiah, Jeremiah and Lamentations, each in the Revised Text, with critical expositions and comments from the best thought of the Christian centuries. The office of prophet and function of prophecy are first considered, and plenary inspiration is maintained. Isaiah is given credit for all the book commonly known as his, the compiler preferring here to follow the example of Christ and his apostles rather than the wisdom of modern criticism. The exposition is a beautiful mosaic, in which are wrought the brightest and richest gems of thought and illustration, and joined and bedded in the soundest doctrine.

Vol. IX. covers all the books from Ezekiel to Malachi. Here the conservatism of the compiler emerges more clearly than ever; for while he does not hesitate to present, and fairly present, the theories of the advanced criticism, he as fairly refutes them, and shows the preponderance, in numbers, quality of judgment, spirit and method, and result, of the conservative school. Especially in the introduction to Daniel will the reader find a full, careful study of the issue joined between the two schools.

The volume on the Gospels gives us the four Gospels consolidated in a single

narrative. It is also embellished with many illustrations, maps and diagrams. The introductory sections enter fully into the subject of the relations of the four Gospels, their distinctive characteristics, etc., the views of Wescott, Bernard, and especially Gregory being largely presented. Of the practicability of making a single narrative out of four accounts possessed of such different characteristics, we have serious doubts ; but the compiler's efforts in this direction have been unusually successful and happy. His purpose and the scope of the work do not admit of the discussion of the mooted points in the chronology, or of many such questions as those of one blind man or two blind men at Jericho, the going out or the coming nigh to that city, the reference to the prophecy of Judas' betrayal money, etc.

To the student of God's word who wishes a commentary for homiletic purposes, and who would have the best thoughts of the best men and on the soundest lines, we heartily commend these rich compilations. In clearness and beauty of typography the volumes cannot be surpassed. It is a delight to read them. The most favorable terms are offered for the purchase of the entire series.

GEORGE SUMMEY.