

THE PRESBYTERIAN AND REFORMED REVIEW

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I.

THE REAL PROBLEM OF INSPIRATION.

A GREAT deal is being said of late of "the present problem of inspiration," with a general implication that the Christian doctrine of the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures has been brought into straits by modern investigation, and needs now to adapt itself to certain assured but damaging results of the scientific study of the Bible. Thus, because of an assumed "present distress," Canon Cheyne, in a paper read at the English Church Congress of 1888, commended a most revolutionary book of Mr. R. F. Horton's, called *Inspiration and the Bible*,* which explains away inspiration properly so called altogether, as the best book he could think of on the subject. And Mr. Charles Gore defends the concessive method of treating the subject of inspiration adopted in *Lux Mundi*, by the plea that the purpose of the writers of that volume "was 'to succour a distressed faith,' by endeavoring to bring the Christian creed into its right relation to the modern growth of knowledge, scientific, historical, critical."† On our side of the water, Dr. Washington Gladden has published a volume which begins by presenting certain "new" views of the structure of the books of the Bible as established facts, and proceeds to the conclusion that: "Evidently neither the theory of verbal inspiration nor the theory of plenary inspiration can be made to fit the facts which a careful study of the writings themselves brings before us. These writings are not inspired

* *Inspiration and the Bible*. An Inquiry. By Robert F. Horton, M.A., Late Fellow of New College, Oxford. Fourth Edition. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1889.

† *Lux Mundi*. Tenth Edition. London: John Murray, 1890. P. xi.

to the apostolic age and the Lollards to Walter Lollard.—*Finney Memorial Addresses*. By Rev. James Brand, D.D., and Prof. John M. Ellis. Pp. 46. (Oberlin: E. J. Goodrich, 1893.) These addresses were delivered on the occasion of the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of President Finney, which was observed on the 29th of August, 1892. One is enabled to realize on perusing addresses like these the marvelous progress that has been made within the century, as well as the pivotal importance of such lives as Finney's.—*Israel Edson Dwinell, D.D.* A Memoir. By Rev. Henry E. Jewett, with Sermons. Pp. 320. (Oakland, Cal.: W. B. Hardy.) This is a worthy memorial volume to one who was a good and useful man, having for thirty years held a most prominent place in California Congregationalism and participated in almost every important enterprise under the auspices of that body. The story of the life is told in a simple manner by a loving admirer. The volume also contains eight selected sermons which testify through their evident superior qualities to the fairness of the estimate put on Dr. Dwinell by his sympathetic biographer.—*Short History of the Presbyterian Church in the Dominion of Canada from the Earliest to the Present Time*. By William Gregg, A.M., D.D., Professor of Church History, Knox College, Toronto. Pp. iv, 248. (Printed for the Author, 1892.) The author's desire was to produce an extensive work on the history of the Church of Canada, and he went so far as to publish a few years ago a history covering the period ending in 1834, but finding the task greater than anticipated, and being led to fear that he might not be permitted to finish the work as originally projected, he gives in this volume in a brief form the results of his labors in collecting materials. The plan followed is partly chronological and partly geographical for the period preceding the union of the four branches of Canadian Presbyterianism in 1875, and closes with a single chapter on the united Church since that date.

McCormick Theological Seminary.

A. C. ZENOS.

III.—SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY.

DE VERFLAUWING DER GRENZEN. Rede bij de overdracht van het rectoraat aan de Vrije Universiteit op 20 October, 1892, gehouden door Dr. A. KUYPER. Amsterdam: J. A. Wormser, 1892. Pp. 99.

"Obliteration of the boundary lines" is a striking phrase (we presume of Dr. Kuyper's own coining) to describe the most characteristic feature of Pantheism. "God bears in Scripture the predicate of *Hammabdil*, because it is He who has drawn, first, between Himself and the creature, afterwards within the sphere of creation, certain lines of demarkation." The author undertakes to show, first, how the spirit of our age tends to obliterate these lines; next, to point out the dangers which this tendency involves, and finally to give advice as to the method of resistance it should be met with.

Dr. Kuyper does not belong to those who indiscriminately condemn every feature of Pantheism. If given the choice between a "frozen Deism" and "melting Pantheism," he would prefer the latter. In India he would have been a Buddhist. The deepest spirit of Pantheism is false love. "We may call it spiritual adultery, but still it is adultery from inclination—born out of the pathos of sympathy." Hence all Pantheism originally is of a religious nature, and only in the second instance assumes a fixed form in the philosophical schools. Its prevalence in the present age must be ascribed to three causes: the strong consciousness which our age has of its own power; the overstrained estimate it places upon the worth of man; and the extent to

which it has penetrated into the riches of nature. On the other hand, the possibility of dissolving the manifoldness of the real world into one indefinite identity, Pantheism has created for itself by its union with Idealism. As long as our thinking regulates itself by the real and objective world it cannot ignore the distinctions by which it is confronted on every side. But once the notion having gained prevalence that the "Ding an Sich" is shut off from our knowledge, and that at least the forms of representation and thought are products of our own mind, this great objection is easily disposed of. Through Kant's subjective idealism this view became predominant in modern philosophy. Human thought naturally tends towards unity, and this tendency did the rest. The result was, that in the great Pantheistic systems following upon Kant, all difference between the Creator and creation, between time and eternity, between good and evil, between the holy and the profane, is done away with. This, to be sure, is not a complete statement of the connection between the Kantian criticism and the great speculative systems; still it is one important side of the truth.

The author does not attempt to give a definition of Pantheism, which indeed is not a very easy matter. He contents himself with finding its *nota characteristic* in this very obliteration of the boundary lines. To a certain extent Pantheism has this feature in common with Materialism, but Dr. Kuyper intimates with sufficient clearness that Pantheism disposes not merely of the qualitative, but also of the ontological differences between things, resolving them into the one identical being. And as for the more modern and refined form of Materialism, Evolutionism, this, as we shall see, is considered as a mere application on a huge scale of the Pantheistic principle to the phenomenal world.

We are warned against the inference that Pantheism still holds a position of supremacy in the philosophical schools. The days of speculation lie far behind us, and from the height of Agnosticism we look down with a sort of contempt on men like Schelling and Hegel. Nevertheless, what has long since been banished from the schools still continues to exert a powerful influence in the applied sciences and in practical life. In the theory of evolution Dr. Kuyper discovers this influence, obliterating all lines of demarkation in the sphere of phenomena. The conquests made by this theory in the world of science are not the result of verification by strict empirical proof, but largely due to its success in appealing to the deeper Pantheistic sympathies of the age. However much scientists may deny this dependence, the fact remains that Pantheism could not frame a view of the phenomenal world more consistent with its own principles, than that framed for it by Evolutionism.

The dangers which the prevailing tendency involves relate to personal life, the life of the Church, and the life of the State. Pantheism is fatal to the development of individual character. In the sphere of religion it is inconsistent with the supernatural claims of Christianity. Christianity is in itself a protest against all naturalism and evolution. Christ is *the* miracle. "Bethlehem makes a break in the genealogy of humanity." Hence, the attempt of Pantheism to silence this protest by divesting Christianity of its supernatural elements. The danger is all the greater since the Church itself is carried away with the current, and many of its leaders unconsciously promote the process of dissolution by reducing the supernatural to a minimum and effacing all lines of confessional distinction. In political life, finally, instead of the conception of the State being derived from the idea of absolute right, the latter is made to depend on the former, and is represented as something relative, subject to a constant process of becoming. And after having thus thrown away of its own free will all weapons of defense, our age will end with

standing powerless against nihilism and anarchism, when the people take up the cry: "There are no lines of distinction any longer."

In the third part of his speech, Dr. Kuyper gives advice as to the method of resistance that this fatal influence should be met with. First, he rejects three methods which have proved unavailing. They are the apologetic method, the method of compromise and the amphibian method. The second refers to the mediation theology; the third characterizes the dualism of the Neo-Kantian or Ritschlian School, in which head and heart have parted ways. The apologetic method is rejected because not even the most eloquent pleading can save us in a court where reason is party and judge at the same time. The compromise method amounts to a monstrous marriage, and "hybrids do not propagate." The amphibian scheme is impracticable, because Logos and Ethos dispose of one consciousness only, and the proposed division of goods is sure to produce hypertrophy of the head and atrophy of the heart.

The true method of resistance was prescribed to us by God Himself when He called Abraham out of Ur, separated Israel from the nations, and drew a line of distinction between His Church and the world. We should not spend our force in fruitless skirmishing; but retreat behind our defenses, and create for ourselves a new sphere of life, in which all lines drawn by God are respected. This is sure to meet with success. It will yield a basis of operation, enable us to throw up in front a fortified line of defense and to delay the battle until we shall have sufficiently developed our power and disciplined our ranks. This does not mean, however, that there is a single sphere of life from which we should withdraw. On the contrary, Dr. Kuyper wishes a consistent application of his principle to every single department. "We should not rest until we have imparted our conviction to our children and grandchildren, supporting a Christian education in the home, by Christian schools." Even this is not sufficient. "The Christian school calls for a Christian gymnasium, and believers cannot escape from the duty of founding their own university."

There is a wealth of pithy sayings in this speech which we would like to quote if space did not forbid. The treatment of the subject is strong, broad and masterly in every respect.

Grand Rapids, Mich.

G. Vos.

THE LORD'S SUPPER. A Biblical Exposition of its Origin, Nature and Use. By Rev. J. P. LILLEY, M.A. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark; New York: Imported by Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891.

This little volume deserves a hearty welcome as a fresh and suggestive study of a subject of such sacred and universal interest. It is offered as a contribution to Biblical theology, although dogmatic considerations are by no means overlooked. Moreover, it is written from the standpoint of a pastor and aims at a popular rather than a scientific presentation of the subject. It is important to keep this in view in seeking to arrive at a just estimate of the method of treatment.

The Introduction gives a clear and succinct account of the writer's purpose and the scope of the book. He proposes to himself three lines of inquiry, namely, into the origin, the nature, and the use of the Lord's Supper. The inquiry into the origin follows two lines. In chap. i, the meaning, character and purpose of the Passover are discussed. This is followed in chap. ii by a sympathetic and reverent account of our Lord's last Passover. Then, in chap. iii, it is shown how the Passover was merged into the Supper; that the latter did not merely spring up alongside the Passover as a distinct ordinance and then supersede it, but arose out of the Jewish feast by