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I.

TERTULLIAN AND THE BEGINNINGS OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

SECOND ARTICLE.

IN the last number of this REVIEW* it was pointed out that any approach which Tertullian may have made toward formulating a doctrine of a really immanent Trinity will be revealed by attending to the responses he makes to five questions. These questions are: (1) Whether he intends a real distinction of persons, in the philosophical sense of the term, by the distinction he makes between the divine "persons"; (2) Whether he supposes this distinction of persons to belong to the essential mode of the divine existence, or to have been constituted by those prolations of the Logos and Spirit which, according to his teaching, took place in order to the creation and government of the world; (3) Whether he preserves successfully the unity of God in the distinction of persons which he teaches; (4) Whether he conceives deity in Christ to be all that it is in the Father; and (5) Whether he accords to the Holy Spirit also both absolute deity and eternal distinctness of personality. We shall endeavor now to obtain Tertullian's responses to these questions.

(1) The interest with which we seek Tertullian's answer to the

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with no one of its historical manifestations" (p. 164); and consequently, as we have seen, "it makes no difference whether historical tradition concerning Jesus of Nazareth has contributed more or less"—or even nothing at all—to the conception of Him we have found: the content of our Christianity abides the same in any case, and is independent of any view we may take of Christ.

Thus, we perceive, Pfleiderer, as he reduces Christianity to mere altruism, has no need of any Jesus at all in this impersonal Christianity. He can get along with any conception of Christ men choose to form for themselves. It is indifferent to him what we think of Christ, in a word, simply because the Christianity he offers us is a Christless Christianity. Whatever conception of Christ at any time seems to play in best with the altruistic temper and helps men most in each age to attain and retain that temper, is a good enough conception of Christ for that age. The idea of Christ in any case is merely an aid to the altruistic temper, and may be readily dispensed with when altruism is attainable without it. There is nothing remarkable in this teaching: it is the common goal of the "liberal" tendencies of our time, and may be found in greater or less purity of expression in much of the religious teaching about us which still, strangely enough, elects to call itself Christian. There is not even anything of distinction in the manner in which Pfleiderer expresses or defends this teaching. It is worth observing afresh in his book only that we may note afresh the vigor and the variety of modes of presentation in which there is being now offered to the world in the sacred name of Christ a religion to which Christ is a matter of indifference, in the sacred name of religion a scheme of life to which all specifically religious motives are alien. Christless Christianity and atheistic religion—this is the gulf to which much of what arrogates to itself the name of the deeper religious thinking of recent times is converging: and very many of our most honored Christian teachers who have not yet opened their eyes to the direction in which their thinking is running are contributing to the current flowing to this dreary debouchment. The choice lies, and will ultimately be seen by all to lie, between the complete Christianity which is commended to us by the Scriptural revelation in its entirety, and no Christianity at all. No middle ground is possible as a permanent resting-place for the inquiring spirit. The sooner this is universally perceived, the better it will be for all parties: and the value of a book like this of Pfleiderer's is that it will help to this perception. Pfleiderer adopts the alternative of no Christianity at all; but just altruism in its stead. The question which each of his readers will be forced to face is whether he is prepared to go with Pfleiderer to this extreme. If not, he will find the only logical alternative is the other extreme—the complete Christianity which is taught by the New Testament records.

Princeton.

B. B. WARFIELD.

THE ESCHATOLOGY OF JESUS; OR, THE KINGDOM COME AND COMING. A Brief Study of Our Lord's Apocalyptic Language in the Synoptic Gospels. Delivered under the Constitution of the A. B. Bruce Lectureship in the United Free Church College, Glasgow, by Rev. LEWIS A. MUIRHEAD, B.D., Minister of St. Luke's Church. New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son, 1904. Svo; pp. xxvii. 224.

The four lectures contained in this book largely deal with the issue raised in recent times by the hyper-eschatological interpretation of our Lord's kingdom-preaching, of His Messianic consciousness, in fact of His whole mind and message. This interpretation tends to shift the centre of gravity in our Lord's gospel from the ethical to the eschatological, in the sense that the latter might almost seem to have possessed for Jesus' mind a supreme interest for its own sake apart from its religious and ethical implications. So far as the writer disputes the correctness of this position, we find ourselves in hearty agreement with the central thesis of his book, and believe it will render most timely service. He very skillfully

points out the main fallacy of this modern view. It lies in the tacit assumption that ethical and eschatological form a logical antithesis. But in reality there is nothing to prove that in what Jesus taught concerning the eschatological coming of the kingdom and the acts or events associated with it, He was inspired by any other than the purest and deepest religious and ethical motives. The kingdom of the end is still the kingdom in which communion with God and righteousness are central and supreme. Undoubtedly the eschatological crisis contains much that cannot be resolved into purely religious and ethical processes, it contains physical and cosmical elements, and in so far it may be said to go beyond the sphere of the present kingdom which our Lord declares to have been realized in the spiritual sphere even at the time of his earthly ministry. But what there is more in the conception of the eschatological kingdom, materially considered, does not for this reason become extra-ethical or extra-religious, formally considered. It is further plain, and this we wish the author might have emphasized more than he does, that by reason of its ethical and religious significance the eschatological aspect of the kingdom possesses for Jesus supreme, absolute interest and is not a mere fringe, as it were, of His consciousness, nor a mere accidental form for expressing the truth that the religious and ethical forces must revolutionize the world. Jesus believed that nothing short of a cosmical regeneration could bring about the normal religious and ethical state in which the centre of the kingdom consists. If the Weiss-Bousset-Wernle hyper-eschatological view endangers the supremacy of the ethical factor in Jesus' teaching, it must not be forgotten that the opposite extreme, that of undue depreciation of the eschatological element, may easily lead to a similar result. We do not believe that Jesus could have dropped his eschatological expectations without thereby essentially modifying the centre of his ethical and religious consciousness. The absolutism of the latter stands or falls with His eschatology. This the author has not sufficiently taken into account. Another criticism we feel bound to offer concerns the author's inclination to resolve the eschatological utterances of our Lord as much as possible into mere figurative language. It is true his position where he formally puts the question, what Jesus meant by his apocalyptic language leaves the point at issue undecided: "It is obvious that some of the secondary ideas of apocalyptic are represented in the language of our Lord, and it is tempting to ask how far these secondary ideas, viewed apart from the situations that called for their use and gave them their power of appeal to receptive hearers, represented to our Lord an independent system of reality. Did He really believe in a personal Power of evil that had sway in this world, and wrought ill in the bodies and souls of men apart from their own will? Did He conceive heaven as a place above the earth . . . ? Had He distinct ideas of an intermediate state of bliss and woe for disembodied spirits, and did He conceive the final state as accompanied by a bodily resurrection of all dead and a summons of all, yet alive in the flesh, to judgment executed by the Messianic Son of man coming with the clouds? Did He know of a fiery abyss, to which, in the end, Satan and his angels, and all whose names were not written in the Book of Life, should be consigned?" The answer given to these questions is the agnostic one: "We have no means of knowing what Jesus thought about this or that element of what He always presented, and probably in His own mind always conceived, as a whole—the kingdom of God" (pp. 63, 64). It seems to us that, on this point, the author has yielded too much to the influence of Haupt, to whom all the eschatological statements of Jesus become mere imagery. In point of fact, he occasionally reveals an inclination to pass over from the agnostic position above defined to this latter view, *e.g.*, on page 139, where, speaking of our Lord's prophecy of the fall of the Jewish nation and of the end of the world, he remarks: "Only here (*i.e.*, with reference to the cosmical catastrophe), it seems to me, we have the right to say that to His own consciousness the words had no relation to literal fact, or,

at any rate, no such relation to it as the imagery in which He depicted the destruction of Jerusalem." To us it seems extremely hazardous to posit even the possibility that Jesus may have consciously used as mere figurative language what by all others was understood literally and realistically. Of course, no one denies that there are figurative elements in His eschatological sayings as well as in other parts of His teaching. But we see no reason why they should not be recognized here by the same criteria that are usually applied to distinguish figurative from literal language. To put on a line, as possibly equally figurative, the words about entering through the straight gate and the prediction of His own coming with the clouds of heaven, as is done on p. 52, seems to us altogether unwarranted.

We have the highest respect for the motive which probably underlies this shrinking on the author's part from a positive committal to the literalness of our Lord's eschatological speech. This motive appears to be, in part at least, the desire to vindicate the infallibility of our Lord's teaching, which a too strenuous insistence upon the realistic interpretation might seem to put in danger with the modern mind. The author reveals a commendable and most refreshing reverence here, and even outside of the eschatological sphere, in regard to such matters as history and criticism, openly confesses that he is not ready to affirm in the easy-going manner of the day that Jesus must have thought, on such questions lying within the scientific sphere, as his contemporaries did, and where they were wrong have erred with them. But, while respecting the motive, we are afraid that the hesitation to accept our Lord's eschatological teaching at its full literal value is not as innocent a matter as it might superficially appear. After all, is not the shrinking on this point a symptom of the general modern recoil from the supernatural as such? The eschatological element in our Lord's teaching is but another name for the supernatural, and to spiritualize the former may easily become equivalent to the elimination of the latter. We do not mean to say that the author contemplates this in any sense, but that the position he occupies may be abused for such a purpose admits, in our opinion, of no doubt. Besides this, while upholding the infallibility of the Lord, the writer is able to do so at the expense only of that of the Evangelists. It is true, here also, he proceeds with considerable moderation. "There are probably no ancient reports in the world so manifestly objective and veracious as the Synoptic Gospels." "Perhaps they (the Evangelists) never really misreported a sentence taken by itself." But "it is, to me, as certain as any fact in history, that the Evangelists sometimes and inevitably misunderstood Jesus." And "I would stake the entire worth of this investigation upon the assertion that they did not understand fully, and therefore partially misunderstood the mind of Jesus, in reference to the kingdom of God. They misunderstood in particular His way of thinking and speaking about its consummation" (pp. 35, 36). Here again the influence of Haupt's treatise is very perceptible. How the principle works out may be best observed in the author's discussion of the great eschatological discourse, which seems to join together the fall of the Jewish state and the end of the world. Instead of explaining this from Jesus' participation in the well-known peculiar prophetic perspective, which overleaps intervals and marks only the outstanding crises, he attributes it to the misunderstanding of the Evangelists, who felt at the time of writing that the world was coming to an end. Still, even here we are told that there was a certain basis for the juxtaposition of the two events in the mind of Jesus Himself. During the last days of His life His conflict with the Jewish authorities developed to a point of intensity which made Him feel that on the issue depended the course of the history of the world. And this He naturally and inevitably expressed in eschatological language. Only, as stated above, the eschatological language remained to Him conscious imagery, whereas to the later writers it assumed the character of literal prediction.

The center of gravity of the book lies in the third and fourth chapters. The

former deals with the consummation of the kingdom and contains much that is valuable in correction or refutation of the extreme eschatologism of Johannes Weiss and others. The fourth chapter gives an admirably lucid and succinct survey of the Son-of-man problem, in its most recent linguistic phase, and argues with great cogency in favor of the historic character of this self-designation in the mouth of Jesus. As to the sense, the author assumes that Jesus on purpose chose it, because, while to Himself it had Messianic associations from the beginning, it needed not suggest such to His hearers. The peculiarity of the usage, that our Lord always speaks of the Son of man in the third person, is explained, in partial dependence on Johannes Weiss, from the fact that the Messiahship was to Jesus objective, the gift of revelation, something that He hardly dared to identify with His own subjective personality. In Weiss this hypothesis has the form that Jesus conceived of the Messiahship as something future, in other words, that the distinction between Himself and the Son of man was a distinction in the category of time.

Princeton.

GEERHARDUS VOS.

THE PHILIPPIAN GOSPEL OR PAULINE IDEALS. A Series of Practical Meditations based upon Paul's Letter to the Church of Philippi. By W. G. JORDAN, B.A., D.D., Author of *Prophetic Ideas and Ideals*, Professor of the Old Testament Exegesis in Queen's University, Kingston, Canada. New York, Chicago, Toronto: Fleming H. Revell Company; London and Edinburgh.

The Fleming Company is indefatigable in its efforts to spread Christian literature, and the presswork of nearly all its publications is excellent. This book is no exception to the rule. The men associated with one another in this important business deserve the thanks of the Churches.

The title of this book reminds one of olden times. It is so full, and is in itself a study. The author intends to describe the "Philippian Gospel," in which he finds "Pauline Ideals." I confess that I do not like this part of the title. It may be very modern and pleasing to the general public, but is there a *Philippian* Gospel which consists of *Pauline Ideals*? There is only *one* Gospel, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which does not consist of ideas and ideals of man, but of revelations of God's power, wisdom and love in the Saviour. And what is Paul? A servant of Jesus Christ, the Saviour's messenger and interpreter, infallibly guided by the Holy Spirit. He does not deal in ideals, but in realities. His several epistles are special messages and interpretations of the same Gospel, and even in his descriptions of its transcendent glories he is conscious of speaking not of human ideals but of divine realities.

The subtitle of the book is better to the point. The author gives us "a series of practical meditations." The title of his book may sound a little pompous, but the author himself is very modest. In his Preface he says: "The series of simple expository sketches contained in this small volume are sent forth in the hope that thoughtful readers will find in them something of real suggestion and helpful stimulus." He writes for thoughtful readers in general and does not confine himself to scholars. "They cannot take the place of critical commentaries or elaborate theological essays, but as a modest attempt to represent in modern words some of Paul's great thoughts they may perhaps have a province of their own." Certainly they have. My soul longs for "practical meditations" which lead me into the presence of the King. And if I read the signs of the times, correctly there are multitudes of hungry and thirsty souls who long for spiritual nourishment. Whether the *words* used are archaic or modern is of minor importance, if only the old but never antiquated Gospel is set before us as the heavenly manna. But if God reveals Himself in His Word, let us then no longer speak of Pauline ideas or prophetic ideals, but of God's revelation coming down to us from on high.