

THE PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL REVIEW

VOLUME VII

JULY 1909

NUMBER 3

JOHN CALVIN—THE MAN.*

One could scarcely have assigned to him a task more difficult than that of selecting, out of a crowded and influential life, the most salient acts and events for narrative; choosing, out of the congeries of traits which constitute the character of a great man, those of the first importance for portrayal; so combining them in presentation that those who hear will carry with them at least an impression of a great historical figure; and doing all this within the limits of a manuscript which will employ for its delivery not more than thirty minutes of terrestrial time. Yet this is the duty which those responsible for this celebration have devolved on their first speaker.

But who, if he were offered the opportunity, would not seize it with avidity, to do honor to the memory of one to whom our civilization, in all its highest interests of civil government, education, morality and religion, owes a debt so incalculable as it does to John Calvin? And it is therefore with great joy and with a lively sense of the honor that is mine in being permitted to speak of him, even under these difficult conditions, that I rise only to refresh your memory concerning his career and character and the elements of his greatness.

He was born at Noyon, in Picardy, in northeastern France, on July 10, 1509. His father was apostolic notary

* One of three brief addresses delivered at the Calvin Celebration, Princeton Theological Seminary, May 4, 1909.

the necessity of mysticism to a true spiritual Christianity and the pitfalls of mysticism, and the nearness of "ripeness" and "rotteness" in religious experience. He rightly regards Paul as an example of the true Christian mystic, and thinks that the study of Paul as an "evangelical", "practical" and "rational" mystic may check the pantheizing tendency of philosophical mysticism, and may keep back Christian mysticism from emotional excess.

As to the crux of mysticism, the relation between the inner light and the external authority, the author is scarcely consistent. In his earlier chapters he argues strongly that the Christ of experience must be constantly interpreted by the Christ of history, and under the caption, "As a rational mystic Paul tested his subjective experience by objective revelation", he says, "He was not like those mystics whose only Scriptures are themselves. . . . He enjoins Timothy, his son in the gospel, to 'give heed to reading', to 'abide in the teaching of the sacred writings', etc." (p. 145). The tone is different, however, in the last chapter, on Paul's message to the Church of to-day, where a contrast is drawn between an external revelation and "the Bible of the soul", between the "inward authority of the spirit" and external forms, and it is even asserted that Paul's Master "knew nothing of an infallible Church or an infallible book". The earlier chapters, it may be said, represent better the author's general attitude. At the close of his discussion of Paul as an evangelical mystic he finely says: "Throughout the Christian centuries the Cross of Calvary, on which our blessed Redeemer has died, has ever been acknowledged to be the source of the power by which the inner fruits of the Christian experience and the outer fruits of Christian service have been produced".

The book abounds in apt quotations from the mystics and the poets and in striking sentences of its own, and will be found serviceable and stimulating to the preacher.

Lincoln University, Pa.

WM. HALLOCK JOHNSON.

HISTORICAL THEOLOGY.

THE RELIGION AND WORSHIP OF THE SYNAGOGUE. An Introduction to the Study of Judaism from the New Testament Period. By W. O. E. OESTERLEY, B.D., Jesus College, Cambridge; and G. H. BOX, M.A., Late Scholar of St. John's College, Oxford; sometime Hebrew Scholar at Merchant Taylors' School, London. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1907. Pp. ix, 443.

The writers of the present volume have had, according to their own statement, in mind the requirements more especially of general Christian readers and students. While scholarly throughout, it is not technical; it gives what is likely to be of interest and use to the class of readers named and avoids discussion of points which only the expert student is apt to enquire into. Thus, *e. g.*, although a brief account is

given of the Essenes and their mode of life, no opinion is expressed on the origin of the order, nor on its relation to Christianity, even the question of its connection with the Therapeutae is passed by in silence. The book is divided into three parts: I. Introductory; II. Dogmatic Judaism; III. Practical Religion. Of these three the second and third are, in our opinion, most in harmony with the proposed scope of the work. In the first division, which is largely occupied with the antecedents and sources of Judaism, perhaps too much is given. We can well imagine that the protracted survey of the literature of tradition, Targums, Mishnah, Tosephta, Baraitas, the two Talmuds, Midrashim and liturgies will somewhat weary and discourage the average reader before he comes to the more interesting second and third divisions. It is only fair, however, to say that the authors have made the best of what is inherently a very unwieldy and confusing subject. The reader who should feel the need and desire of making a general acquaintance with these matters is less likely to find himself bewildered and lost here than if he were to resort for enlightenment to some technical encyclopædia either Jewish or Christian. In the discussion of the Apocalyptic literature we notice an inclination to adopt the view of Baldensperger, according to whom the Messianic hope as voiced in this literature represents the better, more spiritual, more universalistic, less self-centered element in Judaism,—the opposite pole of the Nomistic tendency usually held responsible for the typical faults of the Jewish system. In a later connection this view assumes the more specific form that the Apocalyptic writings are identified with the Hellenistic strain of Judaism, and that particularly as regards the Messianic concept, a position reminding of Friedländer. Altogether apart from the problematical character of this theory, it would have been more in keeping with the general scope of the work in its avoidance of abstract technical problems if no exception to this had been made in the present case.

The second division, on Dogmatic Judaism, deals in succession with the Law, the Jewish Conception of God, Intermediate Agencies between God and Man, the Jewish Doctrine of the Messiah, Eschatology, the Jewish Doctrine of Sin and the Jewish Doctrine of Baptism. Among the many interesting things here set forth we would call special attention to the reasons assigned on pp. 132ff. for the decline in synagogue attendance and the largely prevailing indifferentism with regard to the traditional orthodox type of religion among modern Jews. As such are stated: the conduct of the services in the synagogue in a language not understood by the people—the dulness and unimpressing nature of these services—the passive rôle assigned to the congregation—the archaic character of some of the customs in vogue in the worship, which renders them alien to the modern at least to the Western mind, *e. g.*, that no women are allowed in the body of the synagogue—the time of the chief service, on Saturday, when the world around is busy. Some of these reasons invite a comparison with the Roman Catholic worship, which labors to some extent under similar disadvantages, and yet, in spite of these, seems to have a firm hold upon the people. Undoubtedly

the main reason for the difference lies in this, that the Roman Church is what the Jewish Church is not, a soteriological, sacramentarian institution, which throws the emphasis not upon what comes to its adherents through the channel of consciousness but through the mystical operation of the means of grace. It is here that Judaism is deficient: it has all the disadvantages and none of the advantages of its archaic make-up. The sacrifices are gone and the Messianic hope is purely a matter of the future.

Of equal interest with the foregoing is the parallelism, suggested on p. 149, between what may be observed in the Roman Church of to-day and has in the last hundred years been observed in Judaism, viz., that the doctrine of tradition as a rule of truth is made to do service for incorporating to a considerable extent the results of modern biblical criticism. The attitude of such a writer as Loisy reminds from a formal point of view strongly of the position of Jewish scholars like Krochmal, Rappoport and Zunz, "who sought to compensate for the loss of the Bible as formerly interpreted by elevating the authority of tradition." This puts the finishing touch to the striking similarity which the development of the idea of tradition in the Romish Church bears to its development in Judaism.

In working out the third division of the work, although there are two chapters devoted to the education and life of the Jew, the authors have for the rest given attention mainly to a portrayal of the religious customs connected with the synagogue. The ritual elements in the every-day life of the Jew, not directly associated with the public conduct of worship are not so clearly brought out. More than half of the illustrations belong to this section of the book. A general index and glossary, as well as an index of reference to the Bible, the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha are appended. We regret to observe that in the earlier signatures the proof-reading has been rather carelessly done. We note on p. xv "end edition" for "2nd edition"; on p. 23 the ungrammatical sentence: "it may perhaps be due to the contrast . . . that accounts"; p. 31, J. Rendel Harrison; p. 49, *ἀγγελος*; p. 51, the incomplete sentence: "The earliest text-book of the oral law (compiled in its present official form about 200 A. D.)."

Princeton.

GEERHARDUS VOS.

GESCHICHTE DER AUTOBIOGRAPHIE. VON GEORG MISCH. Erster Band: Das Altertum. Leipzig und Berlin: B. G. Teubner. 1907. 8vo.; pp. viii, 472.

This considerable volume is only one of three which shall contain a comprehensive history of autobiography. The work was undertaken in response to an offer of a prize for such a history, made through the Prussian Academy of the Sciences in 1900 (*Sitzungsber. der Kgl. Preuss. Akad. der Wiss.*, 1900, p. 55). Two manuscripts were presented,—the one written more from the point of view of purely literary history (a history, therefore, of autobiographies), the other from a more philosophico-social standpoint (a history, therefore, more of