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MIRACLES AND HISTORY.

The remark is frequently made that miracles were formerly a means or weapon of apologetics, but have now become an object of defense. Once an aid to faith, miracles are now regarded by many as a burden, and as some would have it a burden too grievous to be borne. As the work of Paul was to throw off the yoke of legalism, and the task of Luther was to break the bands of sacerdotalism, so, it is assumed, the duty of the present age is to complete the work of emancipation, and to free religion from the twofold yoke of miracle and dogma.

Whatever other aspects the question of miracle may have it is primarily an historical question. Back of such considerations as the possibility or credibility of miracles, or their value as an evidence for the truth of Christianity, lies the more important question, Did the miracles recorded in the New Testament really happen? The perennial interest in the discussion is no doubt due to its inseparable connection with central and cherished beliefs in philosophy and religion, but it is this connection which makes the task of the historian peculiarly difficult. Absolute impartiality in investigating the evidence would be the ideal condition for the historian, but the historical student, as a man of like passions with other men, cannot but be influenced, in considering a question with so intimate philosophical and religious bearings, by the dominant thought of his time.

commend the attempt to begin at the very foundation, and by the aid of Theism and Apologetics build up the whole system; but, when we have attained to the important point where the Bible is vindicated as a revelation from God, why should we then pick out only a fraction of the truth revealed especially when other constituents of the revelation can so easily be shown to be practically of great moral value?

Dr. Horton argues for a "new theology" and uses as an illustration of the evolution of truth the development of astronomy from astrology. So should it be with theology he claims. But in astronomy the *stars* have remained the same during all the course of human history. It is merely man's interpretation of them that has varied. Dr. Horton is in danger of making the all too common confusion between two very different things. On the one hand we have the revelation of God in nature, in man and chiefly in His word. This is like the stars, immutable and unchanging and sufficient. On the other hand we have man's interpretation of these great facts. Man's nature is infected with evil and his reason shares this infection. Because certain conclusions seem to follow necessarily from certain Biblical statements, when viewed by certain mortal, sinful men, however brilliant they may be, this does not prove that these interpretations of truth are surely binding on all future generations. Man's mind is limited. His logic is limited and often woefully inadequate, especially when dealing with things "too wonderful for him" about the entirety of which he, per force, knows little. We have no inspired logic, no infallible interpretation, no inerrant reason binding upon all men.

But nevertheless we cannot fail to remember that as in science so in theology it may be granted to certain men, far above their fellows in ability and clarity of thought, to discover great truths forever binding, to make great deductions which no future generation can deny or improve.

Dr. Horton's book is well written, interesting and stimulating but the standpoint is only that of the practical Christian worker even when dealing with subjects where the impersonal, dispassionate scholarly spirit is indispensable.

Cranford, N. J., June, 1910.

GORDAN M. RUSSELL.

EXEGETICAL THEOLOGY.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT: A STUDY OF PRIMITIVE CHRISTIAN TEACHING. By HENRY BARCLAY SWETE, D.D., Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, Hon. Canon of Ely. The Macmillan Company, 66 Fifth Avenue, New York. 8vo. Pp. viii. 417. \$2.60 net.

A work by Dr. Swete on so important and central a subject as the New Testament doctrine of the Holy Spirit naturally raises great expectations. By unique exegetical qualifications as well as by a theological position broadly in sympathy with the historic faith of the

Church, the author would seem most eminently fitted for giving us the ideal pneumatology, which, after all that has of late been written on the subject in a fragmentary way or from a less believing standpoint, still remains a desideratum. That such high expectations are scarcely realized in the work before us is due not so much to a failure of accomplishment on the author's part, but rather to the self-imposed limitations with which he has set out upon his task. Dr. Swete is so keenly conscious of these limitations that he uses the very first sentence of his preface to tell us that "this book is not an attempt to demonstrate the truth of the catholic doctrine of the Holy Spirit by an appeal to the New Testament," "nor professes to make a formal contribution to the study of New Testament Theology." And positively his avowed purpose is "to assist the reader in the effort to realize the position of the first Christian teachers and writers, when they speak of the Holy Spirit in connection with the history of their times or out of their own experiences of the spiritual life." It does not seem quite clear how the purpose thus defined could be adequately attained without making what the author does not mean to make, a formal contribution to New Testament theology. To realize the position of the first Christian teachers and writers in regard to the Holy Spirit as a factor in history and experience is scarcely possible without a careful biblico-theological investigation of the place held by the conception of the Holy Spirit in the belief of the apostolic period. And such an investigation certainly the book does not offer. To be sure it is constructed on a plan that could scarcely have been improved upon, had a thorough, painstaking study of this kind been contemplated. In a first part the manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the history of the New Testament is traced, and this is followed in a second part by a review of the Spirit's manifestation in the New Testament teaching, an arrangement which well brings out and upholds the principle that the doctrine is subsequent to and the interpretation of the facts. To these two parts there is added a third division, which gives a summary of the New Testament doctrine under the seven heads of the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the Spirit in the Church, the Spirit and the Ministry, the Spirit and the Written Word, the Spirit and the Personal Life, the Spirit and the Life to Come. In the first two divisions the method of procedure is strictly exegetical, even painstakingly so, the full original text of the passages under discussion being each time printed at the head of the several paragraphs in a carefully revised form. The performance, however, does not come up to the preparations, the comment on the texts being on the whole cursory and going very seldom beneath the surface of the common traditional understanding of the matter. The result is an exposition which the intelligent believer may follow almost from first to last with uninterrupted assent, but from which he will learn comparatively little that is new. The freshness and originality arising from the specifically biblico-theological mode of approach are too little in evidence. We miss the finely modulated insight into the

differences that exist between the various New Testament writers in their apprehension of the Spirit, and which gave a peculiar perspective in each case even to the area they have in common. That Peter and Paul, while both deriving the mission of the Spirit from the ascended Christ, yet view the relation existing between the Spirit and the Christ in glory each from his own standpoint, Peter regarding it after the nature of an objective, external gift bestowed by the Lord, Paul regarding it as a self-communication in which the Lord bestows what had become part subjectively of his own glorified humanity, this and similar other things Dr. Swete does not tell us. Although a paragraph is devoted to the Spirit and the life to come, the broad eschatological significance which the Spirit has in Paul as the element of the heavenly sphere and the future aeon is nowhere clearly brought out. In general we feel that the author looks at the subject with the eyes of the exegete and of the dogmatician, but that the peculiar intermediate kind of vision which constitutes the chief equipment of the biblical theologian is not his forte. He puts himself into rapport with the New Testament consciousness through the medium of the general faith of the Church, and by doing this loses sight of what is the individual, incommunicable physiognomy of the period and of the several writers, that in their apprehension of the Spirit which no later age could ever fully share or repeat. We do not overlook, of course, that this defect carries with itself the advantage of giving the reader a vivid impression of the thorough agreement of the Church's doctrine of the Spirit with the main lines drawn in the apostolic development of truth. While Dr. Swete disavows every intention of demonstrating the truth of the catholic doctrine of the Holy Spirit by an appeal to the New Testament, yet, as a matter of fact, a more convincing argument to that very same effect than is contained in his discussion could scarcely be constructed.

It goes without saying that even in the cursory comment of so able and careful an exegete, as the author has proved himself to be, there must of needs be much that deserves the attention and will repay the perusal of students of the New Testament. Especially in the notes that are collected in the appendix there is valuable material. We may specify note P on "Spirit" and "the Spirit" which throws much light, more, indeed, than we have been able to find elsewhere, on the peculiar anarthrous use of *πνεῦμα* and *ἅγιον πνεῦμα* in the New Testament. Such a taste of what the author is able to give makes us all the more keenly regret that he has not seen fit to expand the present fragmentary presentation into an exhaustive study of his subject such as would have instructed, not merely the average reader, but would have also put under obligation the professional student of New Testament Theology.

Princeton.

GEERHARDUS VOS.

THE ETHICS OF JESUS. BY HENRY CHURCHILL KING, D.D., LL.D., President of Oberlin College. New York. The MacMillan Company, 66 Fifth Avenue. 1910. Pp. xii, 293. Price, \$1.50 net.