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THE CHURCH AND THE SOCIAL QUESTION.

By the "Social Question" we mean those "scattering problems", such as "the family, philanthropy, industrial life, racial divisions and collisions", which grow out of the relations of men to each other. The inquiry, then, before us is, What is the duty of the church with regard to this group of questions?

Few subjects could be more important, and certainly none could be more pertinent. Prof. Stein has remarked¹ that as the fifteenth century had for its task the renaissance of art, and the sixteenth century the reformation of religion, and the seventeenth century the development of science, and the eighteenth century the promotion of democracy; so the task of the twentieth century is to be the reformation and reconstruction of the social world. "A new renaissance," he says, "must break upon the modern world, a deliverance from the gloom of pessimism, which is the symptom of an overworked and weary period; a transformation of the instincts of social evolution into rational laws; a quickening of the glad and confident service of the social world as it is and as it is to be". Such a prophecy Prof. Francis Greenwood Peabody pronounces² "too restricted to cover the infinitely varied life of the twentieth century". "Other problems", he rightly says, "are pressing besides that of social redemption." 'Art seems likely to receive fresh attention. Religion is more widely applied than it was. Democracy must be redeemed by more democracy.'

"Yet even if one may hesitate to prophesy about a cen-

¹ *Die soziale Frage im Lichte der Philosophie* 1897, p. 773.

² *The Approach to the Social Question*, p. 1.

living God, so true and emphatic in its adherence to the vicarious sacrifice of our Lord, so positive in its affirmation of the objective reference of the atonement. For these and other reasons we feel that this little volume can not be recommended too heartily. We wish, however, that the authors had not adhered so strictly to their purpose to "provide a clear and handy treatment of the subject for the use of those who are not experts" and so had not been constrained to omit "very much which otherwise would demand attention." Thus, we should like to have the "negative preparation" for Christianity by heathenism developed; and even now the positive preparation, especially along the line of prayer, afforded by Zoroastrianism.

The only blemish, as it seems to us, in the whole discussion—and that is never protruded offensively—is its sacramentarianism. We can not agree with the authors that in the discourses of our Lord in St. John, Chap. VI "there is no doubt that there is a reference to the Eucharist, since the writer is looking back on some seventy years of Christian practice. To characterize the language as mere metaphor and symbol without any corresponding reality is to do violence to every accepted canon of criticism or exposition" (p. 180). Yet how can these discourses be taken literally? Allowing that they do refer to the Eucharist, how can it be to literal eating of the flesh and drinking of the blood of our Lord that they refer? Must it not be that these acts are regarded as symbols of the appropriation through faith of Christ and his benefits? It is affirmed that they are necessary to salvation. Yet no Christian Church, not even the Romish, maintains that a participation of the Lord's Supper is essential to salvation. In a word, the Sacramentarian contradicts himself, not to speak of Scripture.

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WILLIAM BRENTON GREENE, JR.

DE THEOLOGIE VAN KRONIEKEN . . . DOOR JELTE SWART. GEBROEDERS HOITSEMA. 1911. Groningen. pp. vi, 104. Mk. \$2.25.

This is a dissertation offered for the degree of Doctor of Theology at the University of Groningen. The writer takes exception to the well-known view of Wellhausen and his school according to which Chronicles is essentially a history of the cultus, and the priests and Levites are the persons around whom the theocracy revolves, for whose sake even the kings exist, being no more than patrons and guardians of the cultus. Over against this Swart places the view that the Chronicler means to give a history of the theocracy in Israel since David. Not the priests, but the king stands in the center. The main structure of history is that the covenant with Abraham, confirmed at Horeb, is renewed with David. This implies that the essence of the covenant is grace, not legalism. It also means that the whole outlook of the Chronicler is broadly Messianic. The central position of the king even obscures somewhat the figure of the high-priest. His relation to the temple goes beyond the priestly elements in the Messianic picture of the prophets. Hezekiah calls the priests and Levites "my sons." The

function of the prophets in the theocracy is well brought out. Whilst Wellhausen deems it unnecessary to speak of them in characterizing the spirit of the book, Swart shows that they are to the Chronicler exceedingly important as the organs of God's personal interposition in the course of the theocracy, those through, whom God's will becomes a living reality. This explains why their labors relate chiefly to the kingship. Instructive also is the chapter devoted to the piety of Chronicles. Here the author defends the book not merely from the charge of legalism, but also from the recent aspersion by Eerdmans, according to which the ethics of the Chronicler does not concern the dispositive, but only the outward act. One of the theses at the end of the book has reference to this: "Chronicles' doctrine of retribution is not utilitarian but religious in principle." Also Smend's view, that piety and impiety are superficially treated as "cult-conceptions" is shown to be groundless. "Chronicles proves that cultus-piety and true prophetic piety go together in Israel and are found there not in two separate streams but actually flowing through one channel." In general there is much in this dissertation worth the attention of Old Testament scholars. What we have missed is a clear expression of opinion in regard to the historic truthfulness of the Chronicler's picture of the theocracy both as to its constitution and as to its historical development. Do his views in this twofold respect represent the true God-willed intent of O. T. history from the beginning, or are they his own peculiar construction? In a certain sense Chronicles more than any O. T. book gives us the philosophy of O. T. history, and is the seat of the self-consciousness of the O. T. Hence the importance of the above question.

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GEERHARDUS VOS.

THE CHRIST OF THE GOSPELS. By the Rev. W. W. HOLDSWORTH, M.A., Tutor in New Testament Language and Literature, Handsworth College. London: Charles H. Kelly 1911. 12mo, pp. vi, 251. The 41st Fernley Lecture.

Mr. Holdsworth's Fernley Lecture makes a book of excellent quality. If we cannot quite say that it brings a contribution to our knowledge of the great subject with which it deals, we must at least find it a thoughtful and readable discussion of this great subject in the light, and to some extent under the dominance, of modern views. Its subject is "The Christ of the Gospels." But this subject is construed somewhat broadly. Mr. Holdsworth himself outlines the task he undertakes as follows (p. 18). "We are not concerned here with the efforts of the Church, nor with the degree of success it attained. Our investigation is with the Records upon which the Church has been built up. What is the doctrine of the Person of our Lord which is given to us in the New Testament? How did it come to find a place in those writings? The double question calls for at least an outline statement from the writings as a whole, and then for some measure of historical criticism of the Four Gospels.