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HISTORY AND FAITH*

The student of the New Testament should be primarily an historian. The centre and core of all the Bible is history. Everything else that the Bible contains is fitted into an historical framework and leads up to an historical climax. The Bible is primarily a record of events.

That assertion will not pass unchallenged. The modern Church is impatient of history. History, we are told, is a dead thing. Let us forget the Amalekites, and fight the enemies that are at our doors. The true essence of the Bible is to be found in eternal ideas; history is merely the form in which those ideas are expressed. It makes no difference whether the history is real or fictitious; in either case, the ideas are the same. It makes no difference whether Abraham was an historical personage or a myth; in either case his life is an inspiring example of faith. It makes no difference whether Moses was really a mediator between God and Israel; in any case the record of Sinai embodies the idea of a covenant between God and His people. It makes no difference whether Jesus really lived and died and rose again as He is declared to have done in the Gospels; in any case the Gospel picture, be it ideal or be it history, is an encouragement to filial piety. In this way, religion has been made independent, as is thought, of the uncertainties of historical research. The separation of Christianity from history has been a great concern of modern theology. It has been an inspiring attempt. But it has been a failure.

Give up history, and you can retain some things. You

* An address delivered May 3, 1915, by John Gresham Machen on the occasion of his inauguration as Assistant Professor of New Testament Literature and Exegesis in Princeton Theological Seminary.

happy. A comparison between Christianity and other religions is prominent throughout the discussion. The chapter on "New Life from God" shows the author's insight, and closes with the statement that "the spaciousness and beauty of that new life in God to which we are called may only be imagined by the amplex, and glory of His life through Whom we enter into the life of God."

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The Christology of the Epistle to the Hebrews, Including Its Relation to the Developing Christology of the Primitive Church. By HARRIS LACHLAN MACNEILL, PH.D., Professor of New Testament Language and Literature, Brandon College, Brandon, Manitoba. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois (Historical and Linguistic Studies in Literature Related to the New Testament. Second Series. Vol. II, Part 4).

Dr. MacNeill offers us in this monograph a very thorough, almost exhaustive, study of the Christology of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The discussion draws within its scope practically the whole teaching content of the Epistle, since it is all more or less closely related to the Christology. Hence not merely the student of Christology but also the student of the Epistle in general will find much in it that is clarifying and helpful. The author is thoroughly familiar with the older and more recent work done in the exposition of Hebrews and admirably succeeds in organizing and presenting his material. That he does not fully succeed in reproducing the peculiar Christological idiosyncrasy of the Epistle is due not to any defect in his work, but rather to the method of approach pursued. In Hebrews the Christological element is not the dominant element: it is shaped by the soteriological element rather than that it shapes the latter. To understand the document fully it would be necessary to bring out how such a Christology was bound to arise out of such a general milieu of teaching. While good remarks to this effect are scattered through the discussion, the total impression produced in this line is not sufficient. We also must consider it a drawback that the exposition has been worked into an a priori scheme of the development of Christology in the primitive church as the sub-title indicates. This scheme is nothing but the old liberal scheme according to which the sonship of Jesus was at the first purely ethico-religious or at the most Messianic, and that the transcendental aspect which it bears in most of the New Testament writings shows the result of a gradual deifying process. For Hebrews this has the result that the author of the Epistle is credited with a reluctance explicitly to apply the term "Son" to the preëxistent state. Also a tendency is discovered to emphasize the true humanity of Jesus as counterbalancing the transcendental aspect of His person, somewhat after the manner in which the Synoptical Gospels are believed to have conserved the true human Christ to the

church. We confess that of a reluctance to carry the sonship back into the pre-incarnate and pre-mundane life of the Saviour we are unable to find any trace in the Epistle. On the contrary the document appears to us in this aspect even more explicit and emphatic than the Pauline teaching. And as to the emphasis on the identification of Christ with human nature, this also is motivated not by any desire to tear down or offset the divine aspect, but arises purely from soteriological considerations, both the human and the divine natures being essential to the Savior's revealing and priestly function. The modern aversion to finding the doctrine of the two natures in the New Testament can not but obscure the facts especially where a writing like Hebrews with pronounced theological proclivities is concerned. Why the coördination of the two natures should have been more impossible to the writer than to coördination of the two offices of revealer and priest which he consciously makes in several passages, it would be hard to explain.

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HISTORICAL THEOLOGY

Die ältesten Apologeten. Texte mit kurzen Einleitungen herausgegeben von EDGAR J. GOODSPEED. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht. 1915. Pp. xi, 380. Price 7.40 M.; gbd. 8.40 M.

The editor of the *Index Patristicus* and the *Index Apologeticus*, both indispensable, has now issued an edition of the early Apologists, giving a critical text with brief apparatus and literary references. It contains the following: Quadratus, Fragmentum; Aristides, Apologia; Justinus, Apologia; Justinus, Appendix; Justinus, Dialogus; Tatianus, Oratio ad Graecos; Melito, Fragmenta; Athenagoras, Supplicatio pro Christianis; together with an index nominum and an index locorum. The literary remains of the Apologists prior to Irenaeus, except Theophilus, are thus brought into this volume,—or slightly more (the Eusebian Fragments of Melito) than the material covered in the *Index Apologeticus*. In brief introductions the more important facts about each author and the authorities for the text are stated. In the writings of Justin the text is based on the Paris MS and its variants carefully recorded in the critical notes. The text is well printed—in clear type and attractive format. Quotations are underlined—surely a good method and one that might be more generally adopted. The edition should be in the hands of all students of early Christian literature.

Princeton.

WILLIAM P. ARMSTRONG.

Soziale Ethik im Judentum. Herausgegeben vom Verband der Deutschen Juden. Zweite Auflage. Verlegt bei J. KAUFFMANN, Frankfurt am Main. 1914. 135 S.