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I.

THE RELATION OF CHRISTIAN ART TO THEOLOGY.

I.

THERE is a reasonable excuse for the many who see no connection between the development of art and that of theological ideas in the history of Christianity, and fail to perceive that art and literature were twin sisters in the service of religion, inspired by the same thoughts, but appealing, the one to the sentiment, the other to the intellect. For this connection was severed long since—fully four centuries ago—never to be fully renewed, and its existence can now be conceived only by an effort of the imagination conjuring up the ghost of departed realities that appeal no more to the common consciousness of the nineteenth century. In art, far more than in literature, the scene shifts as rapidly as the colors of a sunset: words retain their meaning, but a work of art has a different one for every generation. It is strangely difficult for us to grasp the meaning of the fact that through the general illiteracy of the people, works of religious art were the direct means of instruction in religious belief for nine-tenths of the body of Christians up to the time of the Reformation. And yet, what use has been made of this fact? In what history is the aid of the monuments called in systematically? In what work on the development of Christian theology is a place given to the paintings and sculptures which, through a period of over a thousand years, show more strikingly than words the beliefs of the people and their teachers, with all their slight, temporal and local variations? As a modern writer well says: “The faintest shadows that darkened, or the lightest breath that disturbed the

tion. Some of them have at once taken their place as books of the first order of merit in their departments. Saussaye's "Text-book of the History of Religion," which is now completed by the publication of Vol. ii (Vol. i, 1887) is entitled to a high rank, the volume before us more than confirming the favorable judgment passed upon its predecessor.

The systems of religion which are dealt with in the present volume are the Persian (pp. 1-56), the Greek (pp. 57-194) the Roman (pp. 195-395), the German, including the Scandinavian (pp. 306-341), and Islam (pp. 342-402).

The bibliographical references, which introduce not only each main division, but also all important subsections, are quite full and discriminating. The aim and the real value of single works is often clearly and concisely indicated, so that the reader knows not only the author's general estimate of the works, as entitled to be consulted, but his particular judgment as to their specific worth.

The subjects of this volume are of more uniform and general interest, and the freedom and vigor of the author seem to us to increase as he deals with them. Where he has occasion to set forth conflicting opinions, as, *e. g.*, in his delineation of Mazdeism, he does it with marked fairness and clearness. His style is attractive, and his presentation of his subjects well ordered and well proportioned. The subordinate topics are numerous that possess an interest of their own, *e. g.*, Homer; the Greek philosophers and philosophic schools; the Roman thinkers and teachers of the second and third centuries after the establishment of the Empire and the coming of Christ; and Mohammed. The number of topics of this kind that inevitably lie in the way of a broad treatment of these religious systems would of itself draw special attention to the volume.

The work as a whole is valuable in itself and a helpful guide to those who would pursue broader studies in the rich field which it opens.

Princeton.

CHARLES A. AIKEN.

SUPERNATURAL REVELATION. An Essay concerning the Basis of the Christian Faith. Lectures on the L. P. Stone Foundation, delivered at Princeton Theological Seminary. By C. M. MEAD, Ph.D., D.D., lately Professor in Andover Theological Seminary. New York: Anson D. F. Randolph & Co. [1889]. 8vo, pp. xv, 469.

In this goodly volume, Dr. Mead has made a notable contribution to apologetic literature. The subjects discussed are such leading ones as Theism, Revelation, Miracle, Inspiration and Biblical Criticism; and the mode of discussion gives the work not only a defensive, but distinctly a constructive value. The most marked characteristic of Dr. Mead as a thinker and writer is incisiveness; his analysis is very thorough, and his modes of presentation succeed admirably in bringing his thoughts clearly before the mind of the reader. Another characteristic of his method of writing makes, on the other hand, considerable demands on the reader's powers of attention. Dr. Mead does not strive to make each sentence the well-guarded expression of the resultant of his thinking. His method is to set down sharply the various sides of truth and to trust these forces to unite into the same resultant in the reader's mind as in his own. This makes the reading stimulating, but at times difficult. No writer requires more carefully to be read through each discussion before he is thoroughly understood. And we shall not be surprised to find him, though admirably lucid and generally unmistakable when carefully read, quoted on both sides of some questions. One of the chief elements of value in the book arises from the fact that it is written in full view of all the most valuable

recent literature on the subjects discussed. Perhaps nothing else exists in English which is better fitted to convey a clear idea of the present state of Christian thought on the bases of our religion.

In a book covering so extensive a field, every one, of course, will find something to criticise without abatement of his admiration. In treating of the origin of the theistic belief in the individual mind, Dr. Mead throws a much needed and useful emphasis upon the element of tradition or education. But he seems to us to overstate this element in human growth (pp. 6, 18, 21, 39, 68, 71). We do not believe that, without education, a child would "never manifest distinctively human traits" (p. 18), or "could hardly equal in intelligence the brute creation" (p. 6). This general conception harmonizes with a very low view of the height to which purely natural theism can rise (p. 57); and also with the denial that the knowledge of God is innate (p. 27). Dr. Mead allows that man has "native impulses of the mind" towards theism, and this not merely as a predisposition and desire, but as a persistent tendency to believe in a God; but he argues forcibly against the view that God is an intuition (pp. 27-29). Perhaps a more exact definition is what is needed here. No one believes that an infant is born with a fully formed conception of God, as an infinite, almighty, all-just, all-good person. What is meant by those who contend that man has an intuitive knowledge of God, is that men have natively an undeveloped perception of God. More can be said for this view than Dr. Mead seems disposed to admit; and the analogies of sense perception and intellectual intuitions are closer than he allows. Of course, we have no such full and complete perception of God as we obtain of the external world through our senses—we have not five Godward senses; but it is a different question whether we have not as direct a knowledge of Him as we gain of the external world by, say, the muscular sense, by which we know that we are in contact with *somewhat*, although we have to depend on other sources of information for analyzing this perception of *somewhat* into a clear conception of what it is. Neither does the criticism seem altogether sound (p. 29) that the asserted intuition of God is out of analogy with other intellectual (as distinguished from sensory) intuitions, inasmuch as they are cognitions of the *relations* of things or persons, not of the *existence* of them. The causal intuition, for example, does not wait to act until both cause and effect are before the mind. It is the intuitive conviction of the existence of a cause arising from the perception of an effect as an effect, that is, as an event standing in relation to something else which we call cause, and the existence of which is implied in our perception of the effect as such. So the perception of God may be said to be equally intuitive, *i. e.*, part of the content of our perception of man as man, that is, as a dependent and responsible being, in other words, as standing in relation to somewhat which we call God and the existence of which is implied in our perception of man as such. There may thus be a truth underlying the assertion that the idea of God is given in the very same act as the idea of self—though the contents of this idea are left to be developed by reflection and investigation; just as the intuition of causality tells us that the effect as such has a cause, but leaves the discovery of that cause to investigation. It seems, in a word, a defensible proposition that we are led to seek God by an instinct perfectly analogous to that by which we are led to seek a cause for every effect perceived as such.

The nature of a miracle is admirably developed in the fourth chapter. Dr. Mead's definition is obviously the true one, that a miracle is, shortly, an effect in the material universe to the production of which natural causes are insufficient and which therefore implies the intrusion of a new (Divine) force into the complex of nature. The whole discussion is very fine. We do not accord with the remarks at the end of the chapter, however, on the classifi-

cation of miracles—especially on special providences. When the effect is *per se* one to which the natural forces are inadequate, we call it a miracle; when it may *per se* be assigned proximately to the natural forces involved, we call it a special providence, although the elements of coincidence with a command and the like may enable us just as clearly to trace the Divine hand in its production. The effect of Dr. Mead's classification is to leave special providence a class without content, and almost to lead to explaining it away (p. 121). Of the two explanations of the doubtful cases which he allows, the first appears to us essentially deistic in its tendency, while the second alone seems consistent with the Biblical idea of a living God and the doctrine of concursus. We are not fully convinced either by the strong assertions that a miracle cannot prove the existence of God to one previously atheistically disposed (p. 124), and indeed cannot be proved to him to have occurred (p. 174, etc.). No doubt all that is urged may be true of *some* miracles; but may we not say that *some* miracles on the other hand may *per se* compel the assent of every reasonable mind? If the fault is in the heart and not in the head, of course, convinced against his will, a man will remain of the same opinion still. And, of course again, "a certain degree of religious and moral sense is essential." But the question is not whether men may not find it inconvenient to believe, and hence *try* to sophisticate themselves and render excuses for not doing what they are convinced they ought to do. Nor is it whether miracles can convince animals. The most cogent miracles performed before a company of chimpanzees might well meet with no response. But man is a reasoning and religious creature; and miracles may be conceived to be such as must convince him against his will that God is, and is working. Otherwise we appear to assume that Christ appealed to a proof that did not prove. There is an inherent difference between miracles and tricks, perfectly obvious in *some* cases, *per se*. And it is not conclusive as against this, to observe that we would not believe marvels as great as those performed by Christ, if wrought in the interests of malevolence and appealed to to prove that the chimpanzee is God. Marvels as great as those performed by Christ could not be performed in such interests, any more than doctrines as great as those taught by Christ could be revealed by such teachers. Such works, like such teachings, bear in themselves the proof of their origin from God. Of course, the "wonder" in the miracle is not the whole proof that it is from God. Every genuine miracle has also all its circumstances in its favor. And in order to prove the truth of Christian miracle we can appeal to the moral character of the teacher and the nature of the doctrine taught. The instructor who omitted to insist on this threefold twisted cord of evidence would fall far short of his duty. But it is one thing to say that Christ's miracles have multiform and cumulative evidence for their actual occurrence; and another to say that they could convince no one until he was prepared beforehand by appreciation of Christ's character and doctrine. This preparation does not seem to have invariably preceded Christ's appeals to the men of His day to believe His miracles. We prefer to say that "the works themselves" (*αὐτὰ τὰ ἔργα* of John v, 36; xiv, 11) are enough to authenticate Him that He was sent by God; and that though we believe not Him, we ought to believe the works (John x, 38).

The doctrine of inspiration is in the ninth chapter sufficiently taught and carefully guarded, though it is a pity that no exact definition is given of the term, and it is allowed to vibrate confusingly between the state of mind of the recorder of a revelation (p. 283) and the state of mind of the receiver of a revelation (p. 280); while, on the other hand, it is not sharply discriminated from sanctifying grace (p. 314, etc.). The result is that the abstract of the chapter given on p. xiii is thoroughly satisfactory, while we cannot accord

with all the detailed expressions in the chapter itself. For example, at the very outset (p. 279) we are told that "revelation is prior and superior to the record of it"—a doctrine in which we heartily concur. But we do not know what to make of the very first explanatory sentence: "The discovery of America was more important than the history of its discovery, etc." Has the "record of revelation" no further relation to revelation than the description of America's discovery has to that discovery? Dr. Mead certainly, however, does not mean to teach that the history of America's discovery plays any part in the retention, the continued purity, and the use of America—though his simile might suggest it. The parallel would force us to say, rather, that the discovery of America was more important than its settlement, development and continued occupancy by the whites! In a word, the Bible is more than the "record" of revelation: it is the preservation of revelation, it is the condition of the continuance of revelation in the world, it is a part of revelation itself. Dr. Mead also believes this (p. 315). And certainly the conception of inspiration in which the New Testament writers believed enabled them to look upon the written word as the "Word of God," and hence, as such, His revelation. The proof of inspiration which Dr. Mead develops at the end of the chapter is a most admirable and satisfactory one.

The chapter on the "Authority of the Scriptures" appears to us less carefully worked out than the rest of the book. It is not as clear as the rest and as it seems to us not as acceptable. If we understand the author here, we cannot go with him in his doctrine of the basis of Christian certainty; and we do not think he does his usual justice to either of the opposing views which he cites at the outset. And the general drift of the chapter is dimmed by what seems an unusual and confusing use of the term "infallible." No one thinks the Scriptures are without "defect," "imperfection"—no one speaks of them as "faultless," abstractly considered; but "infallible" is not the denial of imperfection, but of error. All we contend for is that the Scriptures are (1) negatively perfect, *i. e.*, without positive error; and (2) relatively perfect, *i. e.*, for their end (see Hodge and Warfield's "Inspiration," p. 28). Dr. Mead seems to think that negative perfection would be of little worth (p. 348); but that is not the question. The question is, Is it a true characteristic of the Bible? Dr. Mead is not disposed to assert it: we are.

The final chapter, on "The Conditions and Limits of Biblical Criticism," must attract all by its lucid and discriminating development of its subject. Everybody ought to read the concluding pages. The book is brought to a close by some valuable appendices more fully elucidating several points in the text, which the argument did not permit full treatment of at the place.

Princeton.

BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD.

HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS. I. HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS BEFORE THE REFORMATION. By DR. CHR. ERNST LUTHARDT, Professor of Theology at Leipsic. Translated from the German, by W. Hastie, B.D., Examiner in Theology, University of Edinburgh. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark. New York: Scribner and Welford 1889.

This volume will be welcomed as the first installment of a work by an able and well-known theologian, on a subject which is daily becoming more important. The author sketches the history of pre-Christian ethics, and then more fully unfolds the history of Christian ethics to the time of the Reformation. So far as the work goes, it is easily the ablest and most thorough historical exposition of the subject of Christian ethics that has been made accessible to English-speaking people. Indeed, there is nothing with which to compare it except Wuttke's "Christian Ethics," translated