

THE PRESBYTERIAN AND REFORMED REVIEW

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I.

THE MEANING AND VALUE OF THE DOCTRINE OF DECREES.

THE proposal to revise the Westminster Standards has brought the doctrine of the Divine decrees into the foreground. The controversy turns upon this pivot. Other features come in incidentally, but this is capital and controlling. This is the stone of stumbling and rock of offense. If election and reprobation were not in the Confession and Catechism, probably the fifteen Presbyteries would not have overtured the Assembly. It is for this reason that we purpose to discuss the *Meaning and Value of the Doctrine of Decrees*, so plainly inculcated in the Scriptures, and from them introduced into the Westminster symbol. We are certain that the Biblical truth of the sovereignty of God in the salvation of sinners, and of His just liberty to determine how many He will save from their sin, and how many He will leave to their self-will in sin, is greatly misunderstood by many who profess the Presbyterian faith, and who sometimes describe it in much the same terms with the anti-Calvinist, and inveigh against it with something of the same bitterness. The conservative and the radical reviser meet together at this point, and while the former asserts that he has no intention to make any changes respecting the doctrine of decrees that in his opinion will essentially impair the integrity of the Calvinistic system, he nevertheless practically coöperates with the radical in bringing about a revolution in the sentiment and creed of the Presbyterian Church concerning one of the most distinctive articles of its belief. Because revision, be it conservative or radical, contends that there is more or less that is *un-Scriptural* in the tenets of election and reprobation as they are formulated in the Standards, and that

and the teacher is not under the necessity of disturbing his faith in the printed page by telling him that, in a large part of their most common uses, those expressions do not give the real force of the Greek moods. Inconsistency is shown in forcing upon the student's attention the forms of the dual. As a "luxury of language," almost unknown to the Anabasis, it might be passed over in a primer with decided gain in economy of space and in clearness. The statements concerning aspirated perfects from mute stems are vague. Curtius (*Verbum*, ii, 217) classifies them all as second perfects; Goodwin (*Grammar*, pp. 138, 139) as first perfects. Prof. Frost apparently calls them second perfects if they come from palatal stems, first perfects if the stem ends in a labial. But these are small blemishes.

The book can hardly fail to be useful if those who use it observe faithfully the author's directions in the way of thoroughness. There are, perhaps, faults in details of arrangement which experience alone can bring to light; but in the main principles on which it is based it marks a distinct advance in the methods of primary instruction in Greek. The student is encouraged throughout to feel that he is studying a living language. His attention is kept on the alert by the constant call for original application of principles already learned; his interest is aroused by the clear and persistent setting forth of the close relation, in word and structure, between Greek and English; his knowledge of history is increased and his sense of the beautiful in literature awakened by the well-chosen exercises. In external appearance the book calls for criticism only as regards its flimsy cover, which is not adapted for a school-boy's use. Numerous wood-cuts add to the attractiveness of its pages, among which a Princeton mau may be allowed to greet with pleasure a cut of old Whig Hall, figuring here as ΝΕΩΣ ΙΩΝΙΚΟΣ.

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W. A. ROBINSON.

THE WINNING OF THE WEST. By THEODORE ROOSEVELT. Volumes i and ii. FROM THE ALLEGHENIES TO THE MISSISSIPPI, 1769-1783. Pp. xvi, 352 and 427. New York and London: G. P. Putnam's Sons; The Knickerbocker Press, 1889.

This is an important work, vigorously written, thrillingly interesting and should be very popular. The two volumes already published cover the heroic period of the history of the United States. Not unnaturally the chief interest during these years of fortitude and endurance, of heroism and triumph, has centred upon the Atlantic seaboard, being indeed focused upon that serene and undaunted spirit who was not merely the brain and arm, but also the soul and spirit of the struggle for independence. The world has been dimly conscious that there was contemporaneously going on in the West a struggle not less heroic and only less important. Washington paused to note it. Patrick Henry watched, forwarded, spoke of it in words of singularly just appreciation. Yet its true significance was long unappreciated, and is scarcely now thoroughly understood. Like all heroic ages, this has tended to become an age of fable. Tradition has overlaid the period with a mass of foolish, extravagant, utterly incredible rubbish which writers whose zeal was great, but not according to knowledge, have perpetuated in books purporting to be histories, but rising in many cases scarcely above the standard of the "dime novel" and "penny dreadful." Mr. Roosevelt has performed his task with characteristic energy. His researches have been indefatigably pushed to the original sources, not a few of which have been used by him for the first time. His critical methods, which are those of the best modern school of history, have played havoc with many oft-repeated and long-credited stories; while his intimate acquaintance and sympathy with frontier life have ena-

bled him to retain all the picturesqueness of pioneer history in a narrative artistically and critically exact. The result is a rehabilitation of such heroes of border romance as Boon and Robertson, Sevier and Shelby, Clark and Campbell. As generally happens, the men gain, rather than lose, by the process.

The volumes already published cover the exploration and settlement of Kentucky and Tennessee, and incidentally relate the story of two of the most remarkable expeditions in the history of our country, that of George Rogers Clark into the Illinois country, which secured the North-west to the colonies, and that of the "overmountain men" from the western slopes of the Alleghanies, which under the leadership of William Campbell beat the gallant Ferguson at Kings Mountain, and opened the way to Yorktown and ultimate liberty. Mr. Roosevelt very justly points out that the great work of winning this part of the West was due to the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians—paying one more tribute to the part which Calvinism has played in advancing civilization and liberty. Thus, he says (i, p. 103): "The backwoodsmen were Americans by birth and parentage, and of mixed race; but the dominant strain in their blood was that of the Presbyterian Irish—the Scotch-Irish as they were so often called. These Irish representatives of the Covenanters were in the West almost what the Puritans were in the North-east, and more than the Cavaliers were in the South. Mingled with the descendants of many other races, they nevertheless formed the kernel of the distinctively and intensely American stock who were the pioneers of our people in their march westward, the vanguard of the army of fighting settlers, who with axe and rifle won their way from the Alleghanies to the Rio Grande and the Pacific. In the hard life of the frontier they lost much of their religion, and they had but scant opportunity to give their children the schooling in which they believed; but what few meeting houses and school-houses there were on the border were theirs" (p. 273). "The Presbyterian Irish, with their fellows of Calvinistic stock and faith, formed the backbone of the moral and order-loving element, and the Presbyterian Irish were almost to a man staunch and furious upholders of the Continental Congress." Himself of a different stock and a different creed, the ample justice done these sturdy men and their lofty faith, well illustrates the author's conscientious seeking after truth.

It seems almost invidious to point out short-comings in a work on the whole so admirable. Yet it could be desired that some of the estimates of early conflicts with the Indians, in the main just and fair, were tempered with the principle, "To whom much is given, of him much shall be required." The frontiersmen often had provocation to retaliate for Indian outrages in a way in which it can hardly be said that they had sufficient justification. Like all that Mr. Roosevelt has written, moreover, this book bears evidence of hasty composition. His research has been broad, faithful and accurate, though not, in all cases, exhaustive and now and again he has missed the significance of a passage which he quotes, apparently from too rapid reading. The introductory chapter is crude and ill considered and wanting in accuracy of phraseology. Hasty generalizations and minor repetitions are quite frequent. The foot-notes are full of sweeping and not always just criticisms of incompetent, but usually well-meaning writers, who have written of this period. The vials of his wrath are especially emptied upon "Edmund Kirke," whose spirited books are so unhistorical as hardly to deserve to be taken seriously. It is to be hoped that these notes will at some future day be largely suppressed or modified. Perhaps these flaws are fully compensated by the vigor and freshness of style and virility of diction. Mr. Roosevelt plainly has no doubt that the English is a living language, and with a very few exceptions

the text could be pruned of novel words and phrases only to its disadvantage.

The book-making is in the best style of the "Knickerbocker Press," which is sufficient commendation for any book.

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THE POETRY OF TENNYSON. By HENRY VAN DYKE. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1889.

A volume discussing Tennyson's poetry is sure of commanding attention. No poet of our time is so generally read, and none, we may say, is more beloved. He has endeared himself to so many hearts by his "In Memoriam," that even where there may be no high critical appreciation of his poetry, there is sure to be a warm liking for the poet, who has brought to human sorrow such a balm as is found in his noted elegy on Arthur Hallam.

The volume before us, however, addresses the cultivated tastes of all who love a true poetry. It is the fruit of years of appreciative study of the poet. The estimate formed has been formed after close investigation of the poet's entire career, and after a careful and fruitful comparison of changes in some of the poems themselves and of changes in the general style of the poet's workmanship. In his Preface, the author deprecates any specific critical attitude. "I should be sorry to have any one take [this book] merely as a collection of critical essays" (Preface, p. ix). The sentence which indicates the standpoint from which the book is written is that "poetry is a part of life and a most important part." That sentence as expanded in the closing pages of the Preface is an admirable estimate of the function of poetry, and the reasons given by the author on pp. xi-xiii, for ranking Tennyson with the world's great poets are eloquently stated. The scope of treatment for the subject is indicated at once by the titles of the successive chapters: "The First Flight," "The Palace of Art," "Milton and Tennyson," "Two Splendid Failures," "The Idylls of the King," "The Historic Trilogy," "The Bible in Tennyson," "The Chronology of Tennyson," "A List of Biblical Quotations and Allusions found in the Works of Tennyson."

The discussion of Tennyson's "First Flight" traces in the volume of 1827, "Poems by Two Brothers," the influence of Byron—in the opinion of the author, an influence not hitherto marked by students of Tennyson. It calls attention also to the variety of metrical forms there, as in his later efforts, so distinctive a mark of his poetic art. It finds also thoughts and phrases used again by the Laureate in his maturer works. It is, however, in the essay entitled the "Palace of Art" that the author discusses the real advent of Tennyson into poetry. It is his view that Tennyson profited by the sharp, not to say searching and supercilious criticism, of Lockhart, *et id omne genus*. And further, by a comparison of the "Palace of Art," as it stood in 1884, with the poem in the edition of 1833, Dr. van Dyke shows clearly the growth of the poet's genius, both in poetic form and poetic idea. Not, however, till the appearance of the poems of 1842 was his place among English poets fully assured. All earlier work needed the lessons which the critics gave without stint and without, we may add, sympathy or grace.

By far the longest and most elaborate discussion in the volume is that on "Tennyson and Milton." The ground taken is that Tennyson is next of kin to Milton. "Their best qualities are the same. . . . They are marked by the same exact observation of nature, the same sensitive perception of her most speaking aspects, the same charm of simple and musical description." In poetic use of double words, in the effect on their poetic development of a great moral shock, with Milton, the civil war, with Tennyson, the death of Arthur Hallam, in their treatment of the whole theme of womanhood, the