

THE PRESBYTERIAN AND REFORMED REVIEW

No. 11—July, 1892.

I.

THE TESTIMONY OF CHRIST TO THE OLD TESTAMENT.

BOTH Jews and Christians receive the Old Testament as containing a revelation from God, while the latter regard it as standing in close and vital relationship to the New Testament. Everything connected with the Old Testament has, of recent years, been subjected to the closest scrutiny—the authorship of its several books, the time when they were written, their style, their historical value, their religious and ethical teachings. Apart from the veneration with which we regard the Old Testament writings on their own account, the intimate connection which they have with the Christian Scriptures necessarily gives us the deepest interest in the conclusions which may be reached by Old Testament criticism. For as the New Testament dispensation presupposes and grows out of the Mosaic, so the books of the New Testament touch those of the Old at every point: “*In vetere testamento novum latet, et in novo vetus patet.*”

We propose to take a summary view of the testimony of our Lord to the Old Testament, as it is recorded by the evangelists. The New Testament writers themselves largely quote and refer to the Old Testament, and the views which they express regarding the old economy and its writings are in harmony with the statements of their Master ; but, for various reasons, we here confine ourselves to what is related of the Lord Himself.

Let us refer, first, to what is contained or necessarily implied in the Lord's testimony to the Old Testament Scriptures, and, secondly, to the critical value of His testimony.

before His advent; and we are informed, "He regenerated them and made them partakers of Himself, and this in some mysterious way in connection with His descent into Hades" (p. 132). "But for those still in the body there was a different scheme whereby the Incarnation was extended to the individual." "The Holy Spirit," he says, "extends to us the Incarnation through the sacraments" (p. 189.) The sacraments convey grace invariably, except where some obstacle is interposed by the recipient. We are regenerated in baptism, which is the initial sacrament by which the Incarnation is extended to us. What precisely the author means by "the extension of the Incarnation to us," he nowhere explains. It is probably one of those phrases which is most effective where least understood. But he informs us that Christ "is in living union with all creation through man's nature" (p. 127). He might have given some hint of what it is which differentiates his relation to angels and inanimate creation, from His relation to man.

It is evident that this view of the method of our union to Christ allows no place to faith such as it holds in the New Testament. Indeed, the lecturer scarcely seems to know what faith is, or what to do with it. His reference to it is instructive: "We must ask, as did the first converts, 'What must I do to be saved?' The answer will be the same as ever. The Creator requires in the first instance the subjection—the willing, free subjection—of the will of the intelligent agent to His will" (p. 129). This solitary reference to such a vital topic suggests two remarks: 1. The answer is neither in form nor in substance that of the Apostle Paul. Faith may implicate our entire moral and spiritual nature, but it cannot be correctly described as a mere subjection of our will to the will of Christ. 2. It seems impossible to resist the conclusion that the painful incapacity of this "master of Israel" to comprehend the real import of the apostolic answer, is largely due to its felt incompatibility with the sacramentarianism to which he is wedded. For when it is perceived that a personal faith in Christ is indissolubly linked with salvation, the foundation on which the sacramentarian theory rests, is gone. The sacraments can no longer be regarded as a *means* essential to our union with Christ and our salvation through Him, but must take the place of important duties and privileges enjoined, which loyalty to Christ and a regard for our highest well-being will not suffer us to overlook.

Toronto.

WILLIAM MACLAREN.

Natural Theology. The Gifford Lectures, delivered before the University of Edinburgh in 1891. By Prof. Sir G. G. Stokes, Bart., M.P. 12mo, pp. viii, 272. (London and Edinburgh: A. C. Black & Co., 1891.) There is something exceedingly engaging in the simplicity, modesty and sweet reasonableness of the desultory talks on points in religion and morals, considered from the point of view of reason, which Sir G. G. Stokes made do duty for the Gifford Lectures of 1891. The reader feels precisely as if he were sitting at the footstool of some wise old gentleman, listening with great delight to his garnered wisdom. A science or any concatenated contribution towards the science of natural theology, we can scarcely consider this body of pleasant musings; but every serious-minded man will enjoy reading them, and it is far from useless to have laid before us the opinions which so eminent an investigator in physics and mathematics has been led to form on so many disputed questions. Take for example the matter of evolution. Consonant with the general method (or lack of method) of the book, it comes up repeatedly for consideration.

"Even supposing the theory to be accepted as accounting for the permanence of more or less neighboring species, it seems to me inconceivable that it should be competent to bridge over the interval which separates remote forms" (p. 43, cf. p. 116). "There are structures so complex, so artificial, so eminently (to all appearances at least) having a purpose to serve, that it seems incon-

ceivable that they could have been built up by a mere selection of haphazard variations from a type which in consequence of this selection undergoes a slow secular change" (p. 44). "The evidence appears to be utterly insufficient to establish, on scientific grounds, the derivation of man by continuous natural transmutation from some different form of living thing" (p. 73). "On the whole, the scientific evidence for transmutation, in other words for evolution, as applied to the origin of man, seems to me, I confess, of the very slenderest kind" (p. 74, cf. pp. 117, 170). As to the eye: "It seems impossible to regard it as the mere outcome of casual variations taking place in a vast series of generations, combined with a selective preservation of the more advantageous" (p. 212).

But Prof. Stokes has in view only the extreme form of the evolutionary hypothesis, as, *e. g.*, Mr. Darwin taught it; he is careful to warn his readers against jumping to the other extreme and excluding second causes, as Mr. Darwin sought to exclude the first cause.—*The Spirit of Man. An Essay in Christian Philosophy.* By Arthur Chandler, M.A., Rector of Poplar E., Fellow and Late Tutor of Brazenose College, Oxford. 12mo, pp. xii, 227. (London and New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1891.) Mr. Chandler's strength lies in the philosophical and sociological sides of his discussion, and it is a pity that he did not omit his more theological chapters, the thinking in which is obscure and the theology of which is absurd—from the construction of the doctrine of the Trinity to that of the doctrine of Redemption (which is purely gnostic). Nothing can exceed, however, the clearness and force with which he writes on his proper theme of Christian philosophy. In the first chapter—on "Knowledge and Reality"—although he criticises acutely the idealism of both Berkeley and T. H. Green, he ends himself in a subtle idealism; by the aid of the subjective and objective senses of the word Truth, identifying knowledge and reality, and making reality itself the product of sensation interpreted by reason. *Knowledge* is no doubt produced by the interaction of sensation and reason (p. 27): and *sensation itself* is no doubt as little a copy of outside reality as the spectrum of a star is a copy of its constitution or its motion. Sensation needs interpreting to give knowledge, and reason is the interpreter. But our confidence in the truth of our *interpreted sensation*, *i. e.*, in its conformity to outside reality, is ineradicable: and accordingly the common-sense view that knowledge is a copy of the real world outside us, which the author sharply criticises, will always rule. This confidence is resolvable ultimately, no doubt, into our confidence in God as Creator both of the external world and the perceptive mind; and the development of this idea by Mr. Chandler (p. 33 *sq.*) is most excellently done, though, of course, from his idealistic point of view, he can speak of God as Creator of the world we know only as he creates both the elements (sensation and reason), from whose interaction the world of truth springs into being. Thus, however, he develops, even from his point of view, a defense alike of the individuality of knowledge and of the unity of truth. We do not know where we have read more strikingly clear and just chapters than those on "Virtue" and "Institutions," which close the volume. In the former the perfection of Christian ethics, in area, object and motive, is set over against the failure of Greek ethics primarily in area, and the failure of Utilitarian ethics primarily in object. The Greek recognized the claim only of his fellow-citizen upon him, and accordingly found virtue consistent with the most cynical immorality and cold-blooded cruelty towards all others. The Utilitarian loses what he gains in area by his low idea of the object in view, pleasure: "Those to whom duties are owed are men conceived of as creatures capable of feeling pleasure. Now, *creature capable of feeling pleasure* is *animal*, and thus Bentham's celebrated dictum comes to this: Every man to count as an animal and no man as more than an animal" (p. 174). Christian ethics keeps the area universal, all men; holds the object high, man's perfection; and finds the highest motive, reverence for human personality. The almost equally valuable