

THE PRESBYTERIAN AND REFORMED REVIEW

No. 16—October, 1893.

I.

DR. BRIGGS' HIGHER CRITICISM OF THE HEXATEUCH EXAMINED.

IN the *Presbyterian Review* for January, 1883, Dr. Briggs published "A Critical Study of the History of the Higher Criticism with Special Reference to the Pentateuch." This is now reprinted in a volume, with a few additions and such verbal corrections as his subsequent change of attitude has rendered necessary, under the title of *The Higher Criticism of the Hexateuch*.^{*} In this amended form it may consequently be regarded as presenting the carefully considered views of the author corrected up to date.

There is an obvious distinction between the Higher Criticism *de jure* and the Higher Criticism *de facto*; and these may differ widely from each other. Critical investigations may be rightly conducted and lead to correct conclusions; or they may be based on wrong principles, follow wrong methods, and lead to false conclusions. Dr. Briggs tells us (*Presbyterian Review* for 1881, p. 578) that "Biblical criticism is represented by two antagonistic parties—evangelical critics and rationalistic critics." And he claims to have shown (*Presbyterian Review* for, 1883, p. 70) that "evangelical Biblical criticism was based on the formal principle of Protestantism, the divine authority of the Scriptures, over against ecclesiastical

^{*} *The Higher Criticism of the Hexateuch*. By Charles Augustus Briggs, D.D. 8vo, pp. 259. The Preface states that "ten years ago the author undertook to write a little book upon the Higher Criticism of the Hexateuch, and at that time he advanced some distance in its preparation. But on reflection he turned aside from it, with the opinion that the times were not yet ripe for it." Now "he presents to the public the result of his studies so far as they have gone."

nently working Life, and of the Christian doctrine of the uniqueness of the Son of God (how Christ is superior to the other "Sons" of God, in Dr. Whiton's view, may be seen on p. 68), and of the Christian doctrine of a personal Sanctifying Spirit, but, of course, involve a whole new theology, as Dr. Whiton briefly points out regarding the doctrines of the Scriptures, the Atonement, and the like. The book is written brightly in the form of a dialogue, which has not only the advantages which the author claims for it, but also this additional one—that it enables him to tell the reader constantly, through the expressions of wondering admiration placed in the mouth of the "seeker after light," what estimate he places on his own argumentation.—*Calvinism: Pure and Mixed.* A Defense of the Westminster Standards. By William G. T. Shedd, D.D. 8vo, pp. vii, 164. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1893.) Dr. Shedd's lucid style, the fit clothing of his clear thought, is consecrated in this volume to exposing the confusions of those who have been seeking to mix alien elements of thought with the Calvinism of the Westminster Confession. These efforts have culminated in the two attempts to extrude the decree of preterition and intrude universal grace into the Confession, and to undermine the Westminster doctrine of Inspiration in the interests of a rationalizing criticism. Dr. Shedd, with infinite patience and with admirable acumen and clearness, analyzes the positions of the advocates of these "improvements," and shows their unscriptural and illogical character. It may be possible to neglect his reasoning; it is impossible to refute it.—*The Biblical Doctrine of Sin.* By James S. Candlish, D.D., Professor of Systematic Theology in the Free Church College, Glasgow. 16mo, pp. 128. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark; New York: imported by Charles Scribner's Sons, 1893.) This readable booklet is the latest issue of the *Handbooks for Bible Classes*, edited by Drs. Marcus Dods and Alexander Whyte. No Scotch theologian writes with more thorough knowledge or in a more genial spirit than Dr. Candlish. The present book is no exception to this, but breathes on every page with fullness of information and clearness of apprehension and depth of charity. As a handbook for Bible classes, one would like a more positive and less comparative treatment—more of the essence of Scripture and less of the embers of controversy; especially as the treatise purports to be upon the *Biblical* doctrine of Sin. But Dr. Candlish has done the work he set before him well, and his book is full of modes of statement and points of view which will be useful to students of a higher than Bible-class grade. His definition of sin leaves nothing to be desired—"Sin is moral evil viewed as an offense against God" (p. 11). His elaboration of this conception is both lucid and strong. We note that on the vexed question of Imputation he occupies the attitude that has characterized a school of American theologians, chiefly in the Southern States (Landis, Dabney, etc.), and declines to decide the relations of imputed guilt and imparted sin (p. 122); and we note with surprise and pain that he represents the matter of eternity of punishment as an open question (p. 54).—"*So Great Salvation.*" By the Rev. G. H. C. Macgregor, M.A., Aberdeen. With an Introduction by the Rev. H. C. G. Moule, M.A., Principal of Ridley Hall, Cambridge. 32mo, pp. 138. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1892.) A delightfully and faithfully written exposition of the completeness of salvation provided in Christ. Theologically, it is a little too deeply colored by the peculiarities of the Keswick teaching as to the nature and mode of sanctification; for a clear statement of what this is, our readers may be referred to Dr. Norman L. Walker's account in our January number (pp. 36 sq.). There is also a little lack of clearness in dealing with faith; and the theory of the Atonement and of the all-Fatherhood of God underlying it, put forward in the chapter on "Man Justified," will scarcely satisfy. But,