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I.

THE FUTURE OF CALVINISM.*

THE year 1892 was a year of great importance for the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands. Two influential groups of Churches, both originating in a secession from the Established Church, the one in 1834, the other in 1886, were, after long negotiations, brought together, and in June of that year held their "First General Synod of the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands." For various reasons this event has excited considerable interest. It was something unforeseen and unexpected. Both groups, to be sure, were one in their confession and form of government, and both shared the conviction that a Reformed Christian was in duty bound to his Bible and his confession to break with the Established Church. Still, concerning "the method of reformation," *i. e.*, the manner in which this breach ought to be brought about, there existed an appreciable difference of opinion. This difference in method gave rise to the different attitudes which the two sides assumed in relation to the property of the Established Church and the civil authorities. The Christian Reformed Church, originating in the secession of 1834, had gradually come to consider itself as an entirely new Church, and as having broken off all connection with both the governing bodies and the individual members of the establishment. Consequently it raised no claim in the civil courts to retain or recover the property of the Established Church, and presented itself to the civil authorities as a new and different organization. On the other hand, the so-called

* [Our readers are indebted to Prof. G. Vos, Ph.D., D.D., of Princeton Seminary, for the translation of Dr. Bavinck's paper.—EDITORS.]

by discarding renewedly this very thing to be safeguarded : in neglecting and then discrediting the Bible's own testimony to itself. It is as clear as daylight that the goal to which they tend, and at which they will all sooner or later arrive, is the rejection of all "external authority," and the erection of the human spirit, in one form or another—under the name of reason, or Christian experience, or the Christian consciousness, or the inner light, or the testimony of the Spirit—into the sole test, the sole norm, ultimately the sole source of truth. There is, on the other hand, but one course for consistent Christian thinkers in determining their doctrine of inspiration : to go straight and humbly to the Bible, "rejecting nothing, selecting nothing and scorning nothing," but simply transcribing *its* doctrine of inspiration. It may, of course, turn out that the Bible's doctrine of inspiration is not true. But it is the only Christian doctrine of inspiration. And when it falls, all that has any claim to be distinctive Christianity—which rests on the Bible, its only trustworthy source—falls with it. Perhaps we can do without any doctrine of the inspiration of the Scriptures, when we no longer attach importance to what those Scriptures teach.

Princeton.

B. B. WARFIELD.

Theological Propædæutic. A General Introduction to the Study of Theology, Exegetical, Historical, Systematic and Practical, including Encyclopædia, Methodology and Bibliography. A Manual for Students. By Philip Schaff, D.D., LL.D., Professor of Church History in the Union Theological Seminary, New York. Part ii. 8vo, pp. xii, and from 234 to 536, with a Bibliography by the Rev. Samuel Macaulay Jackson, M.A., D.D., LL.D., pp. 60. (New York : Charles Scribner's Sons, 1893.) The first part of Dr. Schaff's *Propædæutic* was noticed in this REVIEW for October, 1893 (Vol. iv, p. 683). This second part chanced to come to our hands on the very day on which the death of its distinguished author was announced in the daily press. It is not a book which can serve as his monument, not even alongside of his really monumental *Church History* and *Creeds of Christendom*, or of those great editorial undertakings like the American edition of Lange's *Commentaries* which embalm his memory among us. It is not even a book which is fitted to increase his reputation. It bears of course the impress of his special qualities, of diligence and skill in the gathering and use of a very wide material ; the general tone of the book is that of the quiet mastery of his matter to which Dr. Schaff's readers are accustomed ; not only is the whole subject treated with obvious care and with broad learning, but the book is filled with wise remarks and helpful hints ; in particular the notes on the literature of the several branches and subbranches of theological science are a marvel of selective judiciousness. The reader feels that he is in the hands of a wise guide in all these matters. Nevertheless the book falls short of being a satisfactory manual of its subject. It is encyclopædic rather than organic in its structure, and of quite unequal value in its several parts. It is not free from the occasional intrusion of irrelevant matter which is marred by a polemic spirit ; and it is not as a polemic divine that Dr. Schaff commands our greatest admiration. Even in his great works, Dr. Schaff has not always been able to keep his personal theological point of view from coloring his treatment of fact and opinion. In the present volume he permits himself to go out of his way more than once to attack forms of doctrine which were distasteful to him, with argument and almost with vituperation. Thus when he speaks of the Protestant doctrine of inspiration—which moreover his own Church has just judicially affirmed to be an essential element of its faith—he calls it "the (imaginary) inerrancy of the original autographs" (p. 319). He even turns aside from his proper subject to insert a

whole paragraph of polemic against this doctrine (p. 392); and is misled (probably by Prof. G. F. Moore; see this REVIEW, iv, 642, *note*) into ascribing the origin of the distinction between the inerrant autographs and the errant copies of Scripture, which is the very centre of the Protestant controversy with the Jesuits, to the invention of Richard Simon! So deeply can the judgment of an undeniably learned and usually judicious historian be clouded by controversial feeling. In like manner Dr. Schaff repeatedly brands the Augustinian anthropology—which is the expressed doctrine of the whole of Confessional Protestantism, including that branch of it to which he gave his adherence—as “pessimistic” (pp. 342, 367). It is scarcely dignified language to speak of Edwards as believing “in the corporeal roasting theory of hell,” and as “making it as hot as Dante’s ‘Inferno’” (p. 379). The case of Dr. Briggs is gratuitously dragged into discussion more than once, (pp. 319, 400)—not without some amusing consequences. These things are blots on the fair page of the book. It was not necessary or judicious to make a treatise on a purely formal science the occasion for such polemics. We have all long known that Dr. Schaff was no Calvinist. He represents himself as an adherent of the “Evangelical Union Theology”—or “the Mediating Theology”—which he thinks occupies a position so much above that of Lutheranism and Calvinism, and even of Rationalism and Supranaturalism, that they are reconciled in it. The only Calvinism for which he felt sympathy was that which he describes as “moderate or progressive Calvinism,” telling us that it “omits or softens the five knotty points of Dort” (p. 342)—*i. e.*, of course, has ceased to be Calvinism at all. Calvinists, it seems, are to be divided hereafter into a hard, strict, reactionary party which absurdly insists on being what it calls itself—in some sense at least, Calvinistic; and a “moderate or progressive” party, which rejects every distinguishing doctrine which characterizes ecumenical Calvinism! We do not always accord with the formal distribution of the departments in the encyclopædia which Dr. Schaff presents; *e. g.*, we think Systematic Theology is overladen when it is made to include a series of departments from Apologetics to Statistics. We have noted a number of misprints: *e. g.*, “G. M. Mead” (p. 315), for “C. M. Mead,” and the use of dashes when hyphens were needed. Dr. Samuel Macaulay Jackson has added a painstaking Bibliography, which is separately pagged.—*Grundriss der Evangelischen Dogmatik. Zum Gebrauche bei akademischen Vorlesungen. Von D. Hermann Schultz. Zweite erweiterte Auflage. Svo, pp. vi, 154. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1892.)* The views and modes of statement of this most instructive compendium of Ritschlian dogmatics are already well known. The text of this second edition is but little altered from that of the first edition published in 1890, though the book itself has been rendered more useful by a fuller adduction of proof passages from the Scriptures and Confessions. Prof. Schultz desires it to be understood that he publishes the book solely for the use of students following his lectures. At the same time, he expresses the hope that his mode of distributing the material and his treatment of the great dogmatic questions may interest fellow-workers in the same field. His distribution of the material is only formally, however, different from the common order. Here, too, we have the familiar sequence of the topics belonging to Theology proper, Anthropology, Christology, Pneumatology. The most striking peculiarities are that, the topics of Theology proper being conceived only relatively, we are given no discussion of what God is Himself, but only of His relations, under the caption of “God and the World;” and that the topics usually given separate treatment under the head of Eschatology are subsumed as a section of Pneumatology. The actual arrangement of “Dogmatic Statements” is the following: I. Presuppositions of the Christian Experience of Salvation.