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THE RESTORATION OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH TO CATHOLIC FELLOWSHIP.

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THAT man will deserve well of the theological world who shall write, sympathetically but critically, the hitherto unwritten history of the projects and tentatives of Christian union. To be complete, such a history would have to go very far back toward the apostolic age; for the effort after union is doubtless nearly coeval with the tendency to schism, only, in the spiritual system, it is a sorrowful fact that down to our time the centripetal force has seemed to be overbalanced by the centrifugal. But the most accessible part of the story, the most instructive and practically useful to the Church of the present day, is that part which begins with the first rendings of the Lutheran Reformation. The student who should enter upon this interesting task would be liable to some surprises at discovering how many and important are the facts and how considerable the literature pertaining to it. A better contribution to the cause of Christian union could hardly be made than by some such large review as we have suggested.

The motives that have incited to Christian union have been diverse and often mixed, and have taken a long range, from the highest downward. Sensitiveness for the honor of the Church and high loyalty to its head, love of the brethren, zeal for the more effective advancement of the kingdom of God—motives like these mingle or alternate throughout this curious history, with ambitions for a splendid and dominating hierarchy and Babel-plans of spiritual despotism, with aspirations after sectarian aggrandizement, and even with ugly animosities against one's fellow-Christians. Strange and abhorrent as the paradox may seem, it is a not infrequent thing in history to find plans of church union or federation springing from the spirit of schism, just as international alliances, offensive and defensive, are apt to be concluded when war is

impending or intended. The holy sacrament of communion has been, in every age of church history, desecrated as the occasion of quarrel and mutual repulsion. From the beginning of them, the symbols of the Christian faith have been studiously contrived as *ecbols* for the "firing out" of certain Christians.* It admits of doubt whether any form of confession or any plan of church union has ever been proposed without a distinct recognition, either with regret or with glee, of the classes of Christians who were to be excluded by it. Plans of Christian union at their best and broadest have been plans for the union of *almost* all Christians, and generally plans purposely contrived for the exclusion of some Christians, or for admitting them under severe exactions.

It may justly be said of the basis of Church union proposed by the bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church in England and in the United States, that it is as respectable in its motive and its source, and as worthy in itself as any of its predecessors. It is one of the happiest of many indications of the great advance of that denomination, especially in the United States, in every measurement of progress. In numbers, in wealth and influence, in intellectual and spiritual power, in true evangelistic zeal, in courage against public wrongs, and pre-eminently in the difficult work of city parishes, it has made such advances in the last fifty years as hardly any other sect of the American Church has made. And it has shown itself able to bear this prosperity. Gaining in real self-respect, it has learned respect for others. Less and less do we hear of a certain snobbish pride in maintaining an elegant exclusiveness toward its

* One of the earliest of these formulas was contrived by Bishop Cyprian with a phrase which, he flattered himself, would have the effect to keep the Novatians out of the church—men who had incurred his just disapproval for their attempt to keep certain other Christians out. See Epist. lxxvi. to Magnus.

seek to be books open and clear and full of inspiration, that though we may not write we may live, and living teach others to love the Lord whom we now profess to serve.

It is a great thing, as we often hear it said, to have "right men in right places;" but it is also a great thing, and one which more nearly concerns our individual practice, to have the right *man* doing the right

thing, and the right *thing* said and done in the right *place*, and at the right *time*, and in the right *way*. A right thing done in a wrong way is often more mischievous than a thing done wrong altogether. An amusement in itself quite innocent, a practice in itself most holy, a rebuke in itself most just, will become almost wicked if said or done by a wrong person or in a wrong place.—*Dean Stanley*.

LITERARY DEPARTMENT.

BOOK REVIEWS.

CONDUCTED BY REV. CHARLES R. GILLET, LIBRARIAN OF UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

STUDIES IN THEOLOGY. Lectures delivered in Chicago Theological Seminary. By the Rev. JAMES DENNEY, D.D. Second Edition. 12mo, pp. viii., 272. New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son, 1895.

This exceedingly attractive and stimulating volume has been made out of the lectures which were delivered by Dr. Denney to the students of the Chicago Theological Seminary in April, 1894, during a temporary vacancy in the chair of Dogmatic Theology in that institution. They well deserve the wider audience to which they appeal in their published form. A complete system of theology they do not offer us, as the author himself remarks in his preface. Possibly all the opinions expressed in them could not be wrought into an entirely consistent system. But they give us a series of exceptionally illuminating discussions of theological themes; and, as the subjects that are selected for treatment are the mountain masses of theological thought, he who follows Dr. Denney through his discussions ought to find little difficulty in divining the general topography of his system. The nature of the system which is thus revealed in its salient points is, in these days of loose speech and looser thinking, distinctly a reassuring one. It lies disposed about the great central facts of Christianity, which are firmly grasped and held with intelligent tenacity against all assault. A distinctively evangelical tone is thus cast over the whole exposition, and the emphasis is continually thrown upon the greater things—the curse and guilt of sin, a sin-bearing atonement, a divine Redeemer. There is nowhere visible a trace of that

lightness in dealing with such great verities which so frequently offends the serious mind in recent theological writing. Every line in Dr. Denney's lectures bears witness to solid learning and strenuous thinking, and every line is suffused with the glow of a truly Christian heart. He has not stinted intellectual labor in working out the problems that faced him; but with him, it is very evident, it is the heart that has made the theologian.

The method of presenting theological truth which Dr. Denney has adopted is not that of simple exposition or of mere positive statement and proof. He has chosen rather to set out what he holds as truth against a background formed by an erroneous system. There are obvious and important advantages in this method; and there are attendant upon it some disadvantages. Both the advantages and the disadvantages tend to reach their culmination, when the system of error chosen to serve as foil to the truth is a rather extreme form of error. The blacker the background, the more brightly the truth may be made to shine out against it; but also the blacker the background, the more readily may a dull gray, say, be mistaken, in contrast with it, for the white truth itself. That Dr. Denney has wholly escaped this natural illusion, in setting forth Christian truth partly by means of a running criticism upon the theories of Ritschl and his followers, we cannot affirm. In a number of cases the truth, as it seems to us, has appeared too glaring to him; in a few, his eyes seem to have been blinded before it altogether—as, for example, in the amazing instance where he actually adopts Har-

nack's theory of the primitive Church and its transformations, surely without fully considering its implications as to Christian doctrine, for the sake of which very implications, indeed, the theory was invented. But in general the reader will find it distinctly a ground of felicitation that Dr. Denney has selected the Ritschlite theories for his particular criticism. These theories are especially subtle and complete; they fall in with and are powerfully forwarded by some of the most prevailing tendencies of modern thinking; they have been wrought out and given form by masters of thought, furnished with the most adequate learning and endowed with the highest intellectual force; and they are commended to us by a weight of theological and historical authority which is well nigh overwhelming. Dr. Denney has rendered a very great service to the English-speaking theological public by expounding to them these theories in his singularly sympathetic and vital manner, and at the same time exposing their essential shallowness and their utter failure to do justice even to the fundamental elements of Christian truth; and over against them he is able to throw out in a very high light the greater verities of the Gospel. We have been especially struck with the two lectures on "the work of Christ in relation to sin," in the former of which the New Testament doctrine of atonement is set forth, while the latter discusses certain current doctrines of atonement which are pronounced inadequate. But in these truly noble lectures we only find at their best qualities of thought and treatment which are in evidence throughout the volume.

A rather serious criticism must be passed upon the distribution of the material. This concerns the postponing to a late point of all treatment of the authority of the Scriptures. This is not the result of inadvertence, but of deliberate choice. It is defended on the ground that "the Bible is, in the first instance, a means of grace," and its treatment belongs therefore "under the rubric of means of grace;" and by an appeal to the arrangement in certain Confessions, such as "the old Scottish one and the new English Presbyterian one," which introduce the topic of Scripture only at this late point and in subordination to the doctrine of the Church. Surely, however, Dr. Denney's usual acumen deserts him in this matter. There is an obvious distinction between the religious and the theological use of the Bible which he appears to have missed. Most assuredly the Scriptures lie

at the root of the Christian life, and therefore, not only appropriately but necessarily, receive their treatment as such under the rubric of "the means of grace." But do they not also hold a place at the basis of Christian knowledge? And how can a system of Christian knowledge be set forth—or even a series of studies on items of Christian knowledge—without presupposing the determination of all those questions which concern the Scriptures as a source of Christian knowledge? The postponement of the topic of Holy Scripture in such formulas as the old Scotch Confession and the new Articles of the Presbyterian Church of England can be thought appropriate only if those creeds be conceived as dominated by a religious as distinguished from a theological purpose; and cannot in any way justify an attempt to set forth a body of religious knowledge without determining beforehand whence this knowledge is obtainable and how. Just as every system of philosophy presupposes a theory of knowledge, so a theory of religious knowledge—its nature, its mode, its sources—must underlie every theology. It is not a matter of choice, it is unavoidable, that prior to setting forth a body of Christian knowledge we must first establish the sources of that knowledge and investigate their trustworthiness.

It avails nothing to say in this connection that "the Bible is in the first instance a means of grace,"—unless we are prepared to go the whole length with those with whom this mode of speech originated, and set aside altogether the direct use of the Bible as a source of Christian knowledge. Their meaning is clear enough, and is marred by no inconsistencies. Their meaning is that the single function of the Bible is religious, its entire work is to quicken religious life in the soul; and that this religious life, efflorescing into Christian thought, is the sole source of Christian knowledge. Thus the Bible is in the first instance solely a means of grace, and only in the second instance, through the medium of the Christian life quickened by it, does it become indirectly a source of Christian knowledge. Occasionally Dr. Denney speaks in language borrowed from this type of thought. This is so, for example, when he tells us that "no religious truth, no spiritual truth, can be communicated" "by telling it in so many words" (p. 25). But it does not appear that he has adopted this mode of thinking as his own. It would seem rather that he has only in this case, as in some others, taken up out of his broad reading points of view and modes of speech, without suffi-

ciently considering their real implications. Certainly he repeatedly appeals to the Bible as if it were a direct source of Christian knowledge, uses its teaching as a test of Christian truth, and indeed, in immediate connection with the phrase under review, declares that "the Bible is *the* means through which God communicates with man, making him know what is in His heart toward him." In these circumstances, to say that "the Bible is in the first instance a means of grace" can mean nothing more in this connection than that *fides præcedit rationem*, that only a Christian man can profitably discuss Christian truth (cf. p. 16). We grant it with all our heart. But this will scarcely exonerate the theologian in refusing to justify the sources of the knowledge which he sets forth as such. If it be in any degree true, as Dr. Denney affirms with the emphasis of italics, that "the Bible is *the* means through which God communicates with man, making him know what is in His heart toward him," it would seem to be obvious that it is only with the Bible in his hands as the chief source of knowledge of God that a Christian man may fitly theologize; and this would seem to imply that the Bible should be established as such means before the Christian theologizes.

It is not meant, of course, that a writer on dogmatic theology, especially if he pretends to no formal completeness in his treatment of his subject, may not appropriately enough simply assume the doctrinal authority of Scripture, and build his whole system frankly on that assumption, treating of Scripture only as the primary means of grace when, in the consecution of topics, he arrives at the discussion of that *locus*. Such a procedure would merely imply that the establishment of the trustworthiness and authority of the Scriptures as a source of Christian knowledge is not conceived as a task of dogmatic theology, but will find its place in some preceding discipline—in the Prolegomena to Dogmatics, say, or, better, in the preliminary discipline of Apologetics. Were this what Dr. Denney meant, we should be in hearty agreement with him. And this is what is conveyed by a quotation which he has done us the honor to make from a tract, in the preparation of which the late Dr. A. A. Hodge was good enough to associate the present writer. That quotation affirms that, among other things enumerated, "the general truth of Christianity and its doctrines" must be established before the question of the inspiration of the Scriptures is raised. The truth

of the Christian religion in general is established by the discipline called Apologetics; the exact statement of the several Christian doctrines and of the system as a whole is the duty of Dogmatics. The fact of inspiration, in the sense of the tract quoted, is not presupposed in the former, but is presupposed in the latter task—that is to say, completeness and precision in doctrinal statement depend on detailed trustworthiness in the sources of knowledge. We might, to be sure, have a Dogmatics on the presupposition of no inspiration, and of no detailed trustworthiness of Scripture; and we might well, even in those untoward circumstances, have still a distinctively Christian Dogmatics. But such a Dogmatics would be relatively general and vague; and no more than any other Dogmatics could it avoid presupposing a theory of Christian knowledge and a determination of its sources. When Dr. Denney passes over all treatment of the doctrinal authority and trustworthiness of the Bible at the beginning of his lectures, however, it is by no means because he presumes these matters to have been already settled in the preliminary discipline of Apologetics. He simply postpones their discussion to a later point in his lectures, and meanwhile leaves his readers in suspense as to the guarantee he can give them of the propriety of his repeated appeals to Scripture in the progress of his doctrinal discussions—merely, for his part, expressing a "hope that the use which he makes of the Bible in passing will be such as to justify itself" (p. 21).

The formal objectionableness of this procedure remains the same, whether the use that is actually made of Scripture in passing does or does not "justify itself," or is or is not justified by the account given of Scripture when it afterward comes to be discussed. To us at least the frank and straightforward use which is frequently made of the Bible in these lectures very thoroughly "justifies itself;" and we have read the discussions of Bible doctrine and the references to Scripture as the source and norm of Christian doctrine, with the fullest acceptance and satisfaction. But we are not at all sure that this use of Scripture does not sometimes pass beyond the warrant of the theory of Scripture which is afterwards developed. The nerve of this theory is that Scripture is to be received as the word of God, in the language quoted from Professor Robertson Smith, "because the Bible is the only record of the redeeming love of God, because in the Bible alone I find God drawing near to man in

Christ Jesus, and declaring to us in Him His will for our salvation. And this record I know to be true by the witness of His Spirit in my heart, whereby I am assured that none other than God Himself is able to speak such words to my soul." So far so good, we shall certainly say: here is assuredly unassailable reason for finding the voice of God in the Bible. In the Bible alone is there communicated to men the knowledge of God's redeeming love and of its outcome in the saving work of Christ; and to this, when it is once made known to a soul quickened by the Holy Spirit, that soul sets its seal, under that Spirit's gracious influence, that it is truly divine and divinely true. It was not left to Professor Robertson Smith to discover this fundamental argument; what was left to him was to counsel his followers to stop short at this point. And to stop at this point is, as Dr. Denney perceives and justly urges, to stop short of a justification of the detailed use of the Bible text for the ascertainment of Christian doctrine. What is given us by this argument, he tells us, "is really a doctrine of the word of God, or of the divine message to man," and it is therefore "not to be construed as if it were a doctrine of the text of Scripture" (p. 205). True enough. This palmary argument assures us unassailably that God speaks to us in Scripture; but it does not by itself assure us that the Bible itself is God's Word. If we stop with it and seek no further for evidence of the authority of Scripture as a source of knowledge of divine truth, we shall be very apt to find ourselves after a while evaporating the authority of the Scriptures altogether and substituting for it the authority of the Holy Ghost in the heart, by which alone the authority of the scriptural word is validated for us. This happens also in Dr. Denney's case. "The real question," we observe him saying on one occasion, "is whether the characteristic teachings of the apostles, which constituted at once their theology and their gospel, are guaranteed by the witness of the Spirit" (p. 222). And on another occasion he tells us that "it is not very hard to give an exegetical statement of the whole subject" of eschatology; "what is hard is to say precisely what is of faith in the matter, what is made sure to the heart by the witness of the Spirit" (p. 229). Here certainly the authority of Scripture passes into eclipse and the authority of the individual soul under the guidance of the Holy Ghost takes its place. It is surely not necessary to point out that such was not the way the

apostles understood the matter. With them the authority of Scripture was the test rather of the professed deliverances of the Spirit in the heart (1 Cor. xiv. 37). Nor ought it to be necessary to say that such was not the way the Reformers understood the matter. With them the formal ground of Christian knowledge was the written word of God, and the testimony of the Spirit was His creative act upon the heart quickening it to the perception and acceptance of this truth. Let us rejoice that Dr. Denney's practice also is not conformed to his theory; and that his appeals to Scripture transcend his formally defended right to appeal to it. This circumstance may possibly exonerate us from the duty of exhibiting at length his doctrine of Holy Scripture, which seems to us seriously defective at a number of points—in its conception of revelation, of the origin and authority of the canon, of the nature and effects of inspiration, and of the nature and ground of scriptural authority alike.

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Princeton.

BRIEF REVIEWS.

Expositor's Bible.

THE latest volume that has appeared in the "Expositor's Bible" series is that dealing with *The Song of Solomon and the Lamentations of Jeremiah*, and was prepared by Walter F. Adeney, Professor of New Testament Exegesis and Church History, in New College, London. Professor Adeney is already well known to American readers through his work on Messianic prophecy and numerous other publications of great merit. That he is well qualified for his present Old Testament task is vouched for by the work done on the Old Testament theme mentioned above. The requirements of the series have been well met, and the volume is worthy of its place in the collection as a contribution to which it appears. The author adopts the theory of the structure of the "Song" which conceives it as a dramatic representation of conjugal fidelity, and in a spirited way he justifies its appearance in the canon of Scripture. The authorship of Lamentations he denies to Jeremiah on account of its highly artificial literary form and character, and on other grounds which appeal specially to the Hebraist. But the main portion of the volume is devoted to the purposes of the projectors of the series. (New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son. \$1.50.)