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I.

RELIGION AND NATIONAL LIFE.

RELIGION and national life stand in most close and vital relations. Plutarch says that in his travels he had seen many curious things, such as cities without walls and tribes without money; but he had nowhere found a race without religion. Aristotle from the sociological point of view spoke of man as "a political animal," "a social creature;" but back of this conception another Greek philosopher saw man's relation to God as well as to his fellow-citizens, and called man "an animal that prays," a religious creature. The universe about us, full of thought which humanity knows is not of earthly origin, impresses all rational beings with a sense of overshadowing divinity. The feeling of dependence for food and air and water and light, for all things, upon some power that shapes our ends, speaks to man of God and of religion, the bond between the soul and God. The moral sense, the Categorical Imperative, as Kant called it, mercilessly demands that we do the right, and preaches, in commendation or remorse, responsibility; and responsibility of man and citizen is not to society or human rules, but to some Lawgiver above all social and national legislation. All prophets and seers, Pythagoras and Isaiah, Confucius and Socrates, Mohammed and Böhme, have had visions of God as King of kings and Lord of lords, whose house should be a house of prayer for all nations. Far as we may go among tribes and races of men, none will be found, none has been found, without belief in God. The Latin saying, "*Nullæ gentes atheæ*"—No nations are atheistic—is still valid. However far back we go in history, the same is true.

hand acquaintance with the general subject and a scholarly minuteness of scrutiny which marks a distinct advance in its interpretation, and indeed gives back to us the Pontifical very much as it must have been understood in the fourth century. We should not omit to say that we feel ourselves convinced by Bishop Wordsworth's statement, that Sarapion can scarcely have been the author of the dogmatic letter *Concerning the Father and the Son*.—**History of Dogma.** By *Dr. Adolph Harnack*, Ordinary Professor of Church History in the University and Fellow of the Royal Academy of Science, Berlin. Translated from the third German edition by Neil Buchanan. Vol. vii, 8vo, pp. x, 328. (London: Williams & Norgate; Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1900.) In this volume the task of giving to English readers this great work of Harnack is brought to happy conclusion. It contains the whole of a natural division of the work, and is therefore free from the confusing readjusting of chapter-numbers and the like to the exigencies of the mere form of the publication of the English version, which deformed some of the previous volumes. The division of the work included in the volume is that which Harnack calls "the threefold issue of dogma"—for Harnack has so defined his subject as to enable him to embrace in his work the whole history of what he calls dogma, not merely its origination and development, but also its end—as it runs out in the three outcomes of Tridentine Catholicism, Socinianism and the Reformation. Because in these movements he conceives himself to be contemplating the fading out of dogma, he allows himself a more summary treatment here than in the other portions of the history, and we get only a brief outline and characterization of them. This is informed by the same insight and fine powers of generalization which characterize the whole work, and is governed by the same engrossment with the self-appointed task of supplying a historical defense of the Ritschlian theorem. The Reformed Christian will be startled by the practically entire omission from the history of the whole tendency in which he has been accustomed to think the entire history of dogma issues—in another sense, no doubt, from Harnack's. But, on the other hand, the place given to the Socinian tendency has resulted in the preparation of a very excellent account of the radical reaction from mediævalism, in its origin and development, for which every reader will be grateful. On the whole, this is not the best portion of Harnack's great work; but it is perhaps as suggestive as any, and will not fail, in its contents and omissions alike, to prove very instructive to the thoughtful reader. The translation is not everywhere very lucid, and the proof-reading is far from immaculate. (*Cf. e.g.*, already on page 8 a reversal of the sense, by the printing of "not less doubtful" for "not less indubitable.") The good index of the original has been reproduced and adapted to the English paging.—**The Shorter Catechism of 1647 and the Free Church Catechism of 1898.** A Sketch and an Appreciation. By *D. Douglas Bannerman, M.A., D.D.* 32mo, pp. 32. (Edinburgh and London, 1899.) In this genial little tract Dr. Bannerman recounts in simple language the history of the formation and the services to Scotland of the Westminster Shorter Catechism, and then adjoins a few words of hearty appreciation of the new English "Free Church Catechism," which he speaks of (we scarcely think with entire justification) as "the youngest daughter of the Shorter Catechism." Thirty-three of its seventy-seven questions he regards as "obviously drawn from or moulded by questions in the Shorter Catechism"—but we can scarcely follow him in this opinion. And, in general, we consider his judgment as to the value of the new document much too high. Doubtless the estimate we shall form of it will be pretty much determined by the end which it is considered to subserve. Dr. Bannerman himself says: "As a whole, and for the purposes for

which it has been drawn up, this is an admirable catechism," from which we should infer that there are some other purposes which it might be supposed to subserve for which he would judge it not suitable. The Catechism was probably at first projected as a convenient manual for the common use of the Non-Conformists of England for religious instruction in the primary schools, as over against the use by the adherents of the Established Church of the Prayer-Book Catechism. Had it been set forth for this end only, it would have called for little remark beyond a hearty appreciation of its general fitness for its purpose, and perhaps a mild criticism of certain shortcomings in contents, tone, style and method, which even in that case would have been worthy of remark. In any case, it would have been recognized as a more than worthy rival of the Church Catechism, with which alone it would have come into comparison. But it has distinctly not been set forth for this practical end, but has been heralded, in its own preface and in accompanying recommendatory papers from the hands of its framers printed in the public press, as something far more important and as filling a far higher function. It is forsooth a "formula of peace;" and it achieves a task which "at no time since the Reformation until now" could have been accomplished—no less a task than the expression of "all those fundamental and essential truths which are common to all the great evangelical churches" in a manner acceptable to them all; so that forsooth it may well serve as a basis of common confession, and perhaps it would be well even for all Free Churches to adopt it as an adequate expression of the Christian deposit. It cannot be too emphatically declared that it does nothing of the kind—cannot serve any such purpose. And the claim once made (as it was by the chairman of the committee that framed it, the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, in a remarkable article in the *Contemporary Review* for January, 1899—remarkable at once for the enthusiastic, and even unmeasured, tone of appreciation of the new Catechism which it took up, and for the apparently entire lack of acquaintance with the religious history of the past which it betrayed) and once pressed on the acceptance of the evangelical world, as it has ever since been persistently pressed on it, in America at least, by all who were of latitudinarian tendency: the Catechism, in this new rôle of sufficient evangelical formulary, cannot escape that close scrutiny to which other "formulas of peace" are subjected. Under this scrutiny it fails utterly to commend itself to sober judgment. A document which might have done very well to instruct meanwhile the Non-Conformist school-children of England in the elements of religion, becomes absurd—perhaps even dishonest—when set forth as a well-weighed and sufficient platform of faith for the evangelical Churches of the world. Its faults in this light become glaring; its insufficiency, extreme. It is because Dr. Bannerman is looking at it from the former point of view, we are persuaded, that he speaks of it with such appreciation: in which appreciation we should join with him—"for the purposes for which it has been drawn up." Doubtless he would join with us in looking upon it as inadequate and marred by fatal faults if it is to be considered as the common "creed of evangelicals." Those who would study the history and character of this Catechism, which has acquired significance from the use that is being made of it for the end of discrediting the existing credal standards of the Churches, should consult, besides Mr. Hughes' paper in the *Contemporary Review* already mentioned, also the Rev. Mr. Farrand's article in *The New World* for June, 1899, and the shorter papers by Dr. Denney in *The British Weekly* for February 9, 1899; the Rev. William Johnston in *The (London) Presbyterian* for March 16 and 25, 1899, and Dr. Teunis S. Hamlin in *The Evangelist* for May 25, 1899.

