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I.

THE GREAT AWAKENING AND ITS RELATION TO AMERICAN CHRISTIANITY.

JONATHAN EDWARDS and John Wesley were born within a few months of each other in the year 1703. The recent celebration of the two hundredth anniversary of their births has recalled attention to the great religious revival in the English-speaking world in which they were central figures. This remarkable movement derives also a practical interest from current discussion on the subject of revivals, and from the systematic effort being made by our own and sister Churches to revive aggressive evangelism.

The term Great Awakening has long been applied to that revival of religion in the American colonies which was contemporary with the beginnings of the work of the Wesleys in Great Britain. The chief personal bond between the two branches of this evangelistic movement was George Whitefield. And the date usually given as central to the revival in America is 1740, the year in which Whitefield made his first tour through New England. Then the two branches of the movement, independent in origin, came into friendly contact and coöperation, and thereafter their essential similarity was generally recognized.

Although the Great Awakening is usually regarded as having begun at Northampton, yet revivals identical with it in spirit had been in progress for a decade or more under the ministry of Dominie Theodorus Jacobus Frelinghuysen, who in 1720 began his fruitful labors among the Dutch settlers along the Raritan.

At the beginning of their career the Wesleys were much influenced by the Moravian Pietists, and it would seem that Frelinghuysen

made this digression simply to justify our statement that while we agreed in the main with Prof. Orr's criticism of Kaftan, we did not think that Dr. Orr had adequately justified his criticisms.

We should like to give some account of the rest of these Essays, but space does not permit. We would call attention, however, to the interesting Essay on Harnack's famous lectures on the "Essence of Christianity." Dr. Orr shows that Harnack's account of the Gospel as Christ proclaimed it does not accord with the facts as to the teaching of Jesus, and that Harnack's view of Christ is not adequate to sustain even the attenuated view of the Gospel set forth in these lectures. This we regard a well-grounded criticism. But the inconsistency which Dr. Orr finds in the lectures we regard as more apparent than real. Dr. Orr finds some obscurity in the fact that according to Harnack the Gospel as proclaimed by Christ underwent a transformation in the hands of the apostles; and that this is apparently regarded as a legitimate and necessary development, so that it is difficult to tell whether Harnack regards this as part of the genuine Gospel or not. But this apparent obscurity disappears when we realize that what Harnack regards as legitimate in this development is its inner essential truth which he discriminates from the form given it by the apostles. Paul, for example, gave the idea of Christ's expiatory death a speculative form which is not true, but at the same time he was emphasizing a true and fundamental religious idea, viz., that the self-sacrificing love of the pure and good is the fundamental thing in man's moral history. So, likewise, Paul emphasized the resurrection of Christ, but we are to discriminate between the "Easter message" of the empty tomb, which we cannot hold fast, and the "Easter faith" that Jesus has conquered death. If this distinction be kept in mind it will be seen that what is regarded by Harnack as true in this Apostolic Gospel readily fits in with his attenuated view of the Gospel as proclaimed by Christ.

The other new Essay is, as already stated, on Sabatier and Ménégoz, and the concluding Essays are on Dr. McGiffert's *History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age, The Miraculous Conception and Modern Thought*, and on *Faith and Reason*. There is a short appendix entitled *The Judgment of Value*.

We cannot conclude without again commending this volume to all students of the Ritschlian Theology. It is fair in most of its conclusions, and exhibits a wide acquaintance with the literature of the subject. Although it suffers somewhat from its form as a collection of short Essays, it nevertheless sustains the author's reputation as one of the foremost English-speaking students of the Ritschlian Theology.

Princeton.

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THE ATONEMENT AND THE MODERN MIND. By JAMES DENNEY, D.D., Professor of New Testament Language, Literature and Theology, United Free Church College, Glasgow. New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son. 1903. 12mo, pp. 150.

After Dr. Denney's valuable study of *The Death of Christ* in the New Testament (reviewed in this REVIEW, Vol. I, p. 492) this interesting little volume is most welcome. It performs an important service in vindicating the essence of the atonement of Christ, culminating in His death, as a substitutionary offering to God. Its sturdy defense of the objective work of Christ and its significance for human salvation commends it powerfully to the reader whose heart is set on the Christ of the New Testament. Nothing could sum up better the great reality than the penultimate sentence: "It is the goal of our life to be found in Him; but I cannot understand the man who thinks it more profound to identify himself with Christ and share in the work of redeeming the world, than to abandon himself to Christ and share in the world's experience of being redeemed." The true note of Bible religion rings in that: this is, after all, not fundamentally a

religion of imitation but of trust. And what could be better than the retort made to those who are accustomed to insist that there is no atonement in the parable of the prodigal son, that there is no Christ in that parable either? So that, if we are to take that parable as the quintessence of the Gospel, it will be a Gospel without Christ as well as without expiation.

That this high note dominates the volume we rejoice to recognize: that it is not sustained without faltering throughout the volume, we suppose is due as much as to any other one circumstance to the point of view from which it is written. The *Atonement and the Modern Mind* is the title given to the volume. What is "the modern mind"? Perhaps we ought not to ask that question after listening to Dr. Denney describe in such detail and with such brilliancy of touch precisely what it is, or rather precisely what he takes it to be. We rise from this discussion, however, with the conviction that Dr. Denney has not escaped the common tendency to project one's own mind, or to spread out one's own associates, into "the general," and to mistake this for "the modern mind." Important a factor in life as Glasgow has become, however, it is not the world: neither is semi-skeptical Britain the world: nor yet even civilized Europe. There is after all but one "mind" to be considered, and this is the human mind; and the human mind is fundamentally much the same in modern times as it has always been, and is accessible to much the same rational and emotional appeal. The fact of the matter is that Dr. Denney writes here—as elsewhere—under the narrowing and clogging influences of the "Apologetical School," which Dr. Bruce unfortunately founded in Glasgow. If he could only shake himself free from these deadening traditions, cease to fancy that he must adapt the Gospel to this or that temporary and local manifestation (or degree) of unbelief, refrain from mixing a constant apologetical leaven with the Bread of Life, whether as expounded exegetically from the page of Scripture or enforced didactically in constructive exposition, and give us the pure, positive truth as it lies in Scripture and is assimilated from it by his own strong and devout mind and heart—then we should get something worth while from Dr. Denney!

It is to be hoped that it is due merely to the faltering way in which, from his apologetical standpoint, Dr. Denney sets forth his doctrine of the Atonement in order to adjust it to "the modern mind," that we cannot quite make out whether his theory of the Atonement rises essentially above what is known in history as the Grotian or Rectoral theory. Perhaps as concise a statement of the chief elements of his theory as anywhere in the volume is given on pp. 112-113. "The New Testament," we read there, "teaches that forgiveness is mediated to sinners through Christ, and specifically through His death; in other words, that it is possible for God to forgive, but possible for God only through a supreme revelation of His love, made at infinite cost, and doing justice to the uttermost to those inviolable relations in which alone, as I have already said, man can participate in eternal life, the life of God Himself—doing justice to them as relations in which there is an inexorable divine reaction against sin, finally expressing itself in death." When the terms in this passage are explained in accordance with their use elsewhere in the volume it seems to be fairly the Rectoral theory of the Atonement that is in mind. Accordingly, it is taught at once that the Atonement of itself only renders the forgiveness of sins possible: what renders it actual in the case of any sinner is an act on his own part. "It is possible on these terms, and it becomes actual as sinful men open their hearts in penitence and faith to this marvellous revelation, and abandon their lives unreservedly to the love of God in Christ who died for them" (p. 113). "Substitution" is taken in this theory thus in a notably lowered sense. As our substitute, Christ merely "stands in the midst of us, the pledge of God's love"—"a divine challenge to men which is designed to win our heart." It is only "when men are won—when that which Christ in His love has done for them comes home to their souls—when they are

constrained by His infinite grace to the self-surrender of faith"—that we can say He is become our "representative." God may make Him our Substitute: only we ourselves can make Him our Representative. From which it would appear that, at the decisive point, we are our own saviours. This may be very gratifying to the "modern mind": it is intolerable to the Christian heart.

The greatest flaw in Dr. Denney's teaching, however, is that it proceeds upon an essentially "rationalistic" basis—we use the word in the historical and not in the vulgar opprobrious sense of it. He does indeed tell us that "the Christian religion is a historical religion, and whatever we say about it must rest upon historical grounds"; and that we owe what we know of the Atonement to the testimony of Christ which is "in the last resort the testimony of Scripture." But he goes at once forward to add that we do not receive the things thus historically mediated to us and testified to us by Scripture on the authority of Scripture. There can be, it seems, no such thing for the mind as "blank authority." "It cannot believe things—the things by which it has to live—simply on the word of Paul or John," nay, "it can just as little believe them simply on the word of Jesus." "Truth is the only thing that has authority for the mind, and the only way in which truth finally evinces its authority is by taking possession of the mind for itself." The Atonement is to be accepted, therefore, "not on the authority of any person or persons whatever, but on the authority of the truth in it, by which it has won its place in our minds and hearts." We prize the Scriptures because of this truth we find in them, not the truth because we find it in Scripture. Certainly Christian Wolff would have welcomed such teaching, despite the different metaphysics underlying it, as indistinguishable from his own. When we read it, we wonder only that Dr. Denney has been able to set forth so high a theory of the Atonement: and we wonder greatly how he expects to convince any man that the theory he sets forth is true. He does not know that there was a teacher sent from God named Jesus except on testimony that to us in the last resort is the bare testimony of Scripture: he does not know that this man died for our sins except simply on the word of this Jesus: he does not know that this death was acceptable to God and atones for sin, or how it atones for sin, or how it is made available for us—or anything that enters into the essence of the transaction—except on the bare authority of Scripture. He does not know one-tenth part of what he has told us about the Atonement, and what he insists upon as constituting its very heart, except on the faith of these very Scriptures to which he will accord no real authority. When at the close of the book he tells us, to clinch the matter, "And I am very sure that in the New Testament" the exercise of trust in Christ "is first and fundamental," it appeals to *us*; but we resent it a little from *him*. He has given himself no right to urge that argument. We are deeply thankful that Dr. Denney expounds the Atonement to us so richly and so truly. But we look at his foundations and can see no reason why he should be so sure he is right; and we see no reason why to-morrow he may not expound to us something else—which may happen then "to find him"—with equal confidence and equal inconsequence. We are as sure as he can be that we cannot get along without heart experience and that certitude which can come from nothing but the witness of the Holy Spirit in the heart. We wish he saw as clearly as we do that neither can we get along without the "external authority"—*authority*, we say—of revelation, embodied in the Holy Scriptures. That is, if we are to be and to abide Christian men, in all the meaning of that term.

Princeton.

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