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MIRACLES AND HISTORY.

The remark is frequently made that miracles were formerly a means or weapon of apologetics, but have now become an object of defense. Once an aid to faith, miracles are now regarded by many as a burden, and as some would have it a burden too grievous to be borne. As the work of Paul was to throw off the yoke of legalism, and the task of Luther was to break the bands of sacerdotalism, so, it is assumed, the duty of the present age is to complete the work of emancipation, and to free religion from the twofold yoke of miracle and dogma.

Whatever other aspects the question of miracle may have it is primarily an historical question. Back of such considerations as the possibility or credibility of miracles, or their value as an evidence for the truth of Christianity, lies the more important question, Did the miracles recorded in the New Testament really happen? The perennial interest in the discussion is no doubt due to its inseparable connection with central and cherished beliefs in philosophy and religion, but it is this connection which makes the task of the historian peculiarly difficult. Absolute impartiality in investigating the evidence would be the ideal condition for the historian, but the historical student, as a man of like passions with other men, cannot but be influenced, in considering a question with so intimate philosophical and religious bearings, by the dominant thought of his time.

does so, it is strangely neglected by the ethical text-books. The tone of authority in the Sermon, we believe it must be admitted, is not simply that of a teacher who places the authority of conscience over against that of tradition, but rather that of a lawgiver who identifies his own commands so absolutely with the will of God that he can make the hearing and doing of his own words the test of human destiny.

The originality of Jesus as an ethical teacher, says Dr. King, is to be found "in the wonderful unity of life and teaching and influence; in his deep insight into the very heart of all life, into the secret of all living. One finds in him no elaborate deductions, no painstakingly preserved system, but rather an insight so complete as to allow even scattered maxims to be brought into a perfect unity, without contradictions and without inconsistencies. . . . But the great and unique contribution which, above all else, Jesus makes to ethics, and religion is *himself*. No personality can for an instant be placed beside his as worthy of comparison with him; and therein lies the great, peculiar, unique contribution of Jesus to the moral and religious life."

The volume closes with a bibliography and indices.

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WM. HALLOCK JOHNSON.

HISTORICAL THEOLOGY.

THE REFORMATION IN SCOTLAND, Causes, Characteristics, Consequences.

The Stone Lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary for 1907-1908. By DAVID HAY FLEMING, LL.D. London: Hodder and Stroughton. 1910. 8vo pp. xvi, 666.

Dr. Hay Fleming's Stone Lectures make a substantial contribution to the understanding and right estimation of the Scottish Reformation. He has wisely elected not to retell the history of this great movement in a continuous narrative. He uses the space at his disposal rather for the discussion of a number of questions hitherto either ignored or superficially dealt with. This has enabled him to bring his thorough knowledge of the period to bear at precisely the points where elucidation was needed, and to make his book an indispensable companion-piece, or corrective, of all current histories of the Scottish Reformation. The wealth of new information, and of old information freshly marshalled, which he has been able to bring together to illustrate the aspects of the Scottish Reformation he has chosen for discussion is nothing less than marvellous, and, in the mass, greatly advances our knowledge of what really was accomplished in that great revolution. The book naturally takes its place as one of a series of studies of the Reformation period with which the author has been occupied for a number of years. This series was begun by his *Mary Queen of Scots*, the first part of which was published more than a dozen years ago, and the second part of which we are yet eagerly awaiting. It is to be, we shall not say completed, but continued, by the *Life of Knox* which has been in preparation since the premature commemoration of the four hundredth anniver-

sary of Knox's birth a few years ago, and will be given us we trust, in time to guide our celebration of it at its true date still a few years hence. Meanwhile the present volume intervenes and gives us an account of "the causes, characteristics, consequences" of the great movement in which Mary and Knox were, in widely different senses, conspicuous figures, as these may be ascertained from and illustrated by the contemporary records which have survived to our time. For this is the characteristic of Dr. Fleming's historical work, and this is its value: that it is all freshly studied from the primary sources, and thus brings us "back to book", and bids us look at things as they were, and not as they have gradually come to be thought to have been as the years have run on, points of view have changed, and traditions in this or that interest have grown up.

What the volume before us undertakes to discuss is, as we have just noted from the title-page, "the causes, characteristics, consequences" of the Scottish Reformation. These rubrics provide the main divisions of the volume. There is at the outset a chapter entitled "The Beginnings", in which an account is given of the factors making for reformation which were present in Scotland before the coming of the Reformation. Then the causes of the Reformation in Scotland are discussed in six chapters; four of these are given to what are here called secondary causes, though they might perhaps be as well called negative or occasional causes, and two to the primary, or perhaps we may say, positive, or effecting causes. Two chapters follow, on the leading and minor characteristics of the Scottish Reformation; and then five more on certain of its consequences. The whole is closed by seventeen of those valuable Appendices, drawn from unpublished sources, which Dr. Fleming has accustomed us to expect in his books and by which he is wont to settle disputed historical facts.

What Dr. Fleming calls the "secondary causes" of the Reformation in Scotland may be summed up broadly under the one rubric of the corruption of the old Church. This corruption he treats distributively under the several heads of "Clerical depravity", "Clerical ignorance and irreverence", the "evils associated with the conferring of benefices", "clerical credulity, imposture, and rapacity." That such evils existed in the old Church as it tottered to its fall, has been known of course to everyone: they were too much in evidence to be missed. But they have been much too often more or less ignored, much too often glozed; until a feeling has been fostered that there was very little occasion for a "reformation" properly so called, and that not much real change was wrought by the Reformation. To correct this gross misapprehension, Dr. Fleming is at pains to show, from the indisputable evidence of public records, the incredible depravity of the clergy of the day, corrupting by their example the entire community and rotting down itself into an intolerable degradation. The pages in which he exhibits the grossness of the superstition in which many of the clergy lived and in fostering which in the community they found their profit, have the same effect, as instance is piled on instance, as the famous

pages of Calvin's *Treatise on Relics*, which as M. Lenient has said, gives an air of sardonic humor to a mere mathematical enumeration. The pages in which he recounts the wide-spread and deep impurity of the ecclesiastical body fairly reek with horror. Dr. Fleming has taken the trouble to extract from the Registers of the Great and Privy Seals a list of the children of the clergy of Scotland legally legitimated during the period extending between 1529 and 1559—a matter of thirty years. These lists yield 345 sons and 46 daughters, which of course, constitute but a moiety of the whole number. The gibe attributed to Erasmus, himself the son of a cleric, would certainly apply to the clerics of pre-Reformation Scotland, when he declared of priests that *patres vocantur quia sunt*. One would willingly believe that most of the irregular connections formed by ecclesiastics in that age were in effect marriages, only marriages under the ban of the Church. But we fear the facts brought out by Dr. Fleming will not permit us so to think of them. They appear to be rather the result of a deep-seated immorality which affected apparently all ranks particularly of the secular clergy. "The clergy in these lists", says Dr. Fleming, "range through a score of grades, from the cardinal to the curate. No fewer than ten are bishops, and of abbots there are nearly as many. The rectors are numerous, the vicars more so, and the chaplains outstrip them all. It may be noted", he adds, however, "that only three are entered as canons, only one as a monk, and not one as a friar." And then he calls our attention in a note to the remark of the Regent Morton in 1573 "that most of the canons, monks and friars 'within the realme' had made profession of the true religion"—as if we were to infer that the two facts noted might go together. The Church had evidently fallen into a profound decay which exhibited itself in every sphere of both ecclesiastical and personal life. In a couple of chapters remarkable for their utilization of a great mass of new material, Dr. Fleming shows the amazing extent to which the Church fabrics all over Scotland were falling into ruins. He significantly remarks that the pre-Reformation clergy were "in a more deplorable condition than even their buildings."

This exhibition of the dreadful situation into which the Church had sunk, dragging down with it the religious and moral life of the people, was necessary in order to make clear the crying need there was in Scotland of a Reformation, and the nature of the negative preparation which had been making there for it. The next two chapters are occupied with an account of the instrumentalities used by God in bringing this reformation about—all of which may be summed up in the one word, the Gospel of God's grace, presented now in books and ballads, and even plays, now in preaching, now in the printed Word of God itself, now in lives of heroic testimony and cruel deaths sealing this testimony in blood. The careful sifting to which the facts here brought together have been subjected is very welcome. There is one minute point in which perhaps a slight error has been fallen into, which may possibly be worth mentioning. On p. 229 there is cited Lord Lisle's advice to the Regent Arran "to let slip among his people 'the Bible and New Testament in

Englishe'." Dr. Hay Fleming annotates: "When Lisle spoke of the Bible and New Testament, by the Bible he meant the Old Testament. His designation was not uncommon at that period, and is still used in Scotland." The general fact of usage here appealed to is, of course, undoubted; but there is a difficulty in supposing Lisle's remark to present an instance of it. Was the English Bible in circulation in 1543 in the form of the Old Testament and New Testament, issued separately? Certain parts of the Old Testament had, no doubt, been already issued separately, but not, we think the whole Old Testament; and in any event it was precisely in the form of entire Bibles and of separate New Testaments that the Scriptures were most accessible in English at that date—as, indeed, they remain, in a certain sense, up to to-day. It seems to us most natural, therefore, to suppose that Lisle's language, and also Sadler's, quoted on the following page, reflects the contemporary condition of affairs and that the reference is to entire Bibles and separate New Testaments.

From the causes of the Scottish Reformation Dr. Fleming passes to an account of its Characteristics. He lays great stress particularly on its thoroughness, and illustrates this by a rapid sketch of the Church order and modes of worship which were substituted by it for those formerly in vogue. Especial emphasis is thrown also on the subjection of all things to the pure teaching of Scripture, and on the strictness of the discipline introduced, and its effects in a manifest amendment of life. Passing thence to the Consequences of the Reformation, Dr. Fleming first of all devotes two chapters to a defense of the Scottish Reformation against the charge of wanton destructiveness in dealing with the art treasures of the land. We have already spoken incidentally of the historical value of the inquiry included in these chapters into the decay and destruction of the old Scottish Churches. While successfully defending the Reformers against the general charge of destructiveness Dr. Fleming permits no mawkish sentimentality to blind him to the proportion of things; art and architecture may be very fine things, he remarks in effect, but souls are even more valuable, and idolatry is no venial fault. He also remarks with very great point that "even at the worst the burning of images and the smashing of altars were very innocent amusements compared with the burning of heretics." In a subsequent chapter he adds weight to this remark by pointing out that the "decline of persecution" was one of the main consequences of the Reformation. The Protestants carried over from the Middle Ages, no doubt, the theory that it belonged to the civil magistrate to suppress heresy with the sword, and the early Reformation documents continue to announce this doctrine with vigor. But the Reformation nevertheless brought the cessation of persecution for conscience sake. Twenty-one Protestants were "judicially put to death for their religion during the thirty-one years preceeding 1559", but "even in the very crisis of the Reformation when feeling ran so high, and in the period which immediately succeeded it, not one was executed" by the Protestants for religion's sake; and "during the first half century after the old

Church was overthrown, it does not appear that more than two, possibly only one, suffered death judicially for religion". The improvement in morals was equally immense; though of course time was required for its full realization also. One of the chapters on "Consequences" is devoted to one aspect of this realization, that embodied in the reform of the marriage law. Under the Papal rule the freedom of divorce founded on "diriment impediments" to marriage, produced a state of things which can be described as nothing less than disgraceful immorality. Scarcely a marriage could be consummated for the dissolution of which a "diriment impediment" could not be trumped up; and those who had money to spend on such things could secure release from the marriage bond almost at will. Those who had no money naturally learned from the example of the rich to look upon the marriage bond with a contempt which found other modes of expression. All this was at once remedied by the Reformation; and it is not too much to say that if nothing else had been brought by the Reformation society would owe it a debt of gratitude for this, which would be inestimable.

In the final chapter there are pointed out the educational and kindred advantages which have come to the Scottish people from their Reformation. Naturally the Reformers were zealous for a competently instructed ministry. But their zeal went far beyond that. The great scheme which was outlined in the *First Book of Discipline* contemplated making education compulsory, and required "that everie severall Church have a schoolmaster", every considerable town a grammar school, and every "notable town" a college. This magnificent scheme could not then be realized; but as Dr. Fleming remarks it stood ever before Scotsmen's eyes as "a stimulating ideal". And when now at length after so many years it has come to measurable realization it must be looked at as a tardy but real consequence of the Reformation. Meanwhile the Reformers were determined that at least the Church should have an educated ministry, and they therefore set their faces steadfastly against inducting unfit men into the sacred office, even though the land was crying out for their services. They preferred that the Church should remain only partially ordered and manned, rather than that incompetent persons should be admitted to the ministry,—judging that it was just as well, perhaps better, for a church to have no minister than to have an incompetent or unprofitable one. The first General Assembly, consisted of forty-two members, of which only six were entered as ministers; and as the number of ministers increased only slowly as competent men came forward, the expedients of "superintendents" and "readers" meanwhile were adopted for supplying their lack. In the midst of this dearth (in 1547-1545) the General Assembly insisted on skill in the Latin language as a qualification for admission to the ministry.

There may be some danger that a careless reader may imagine that Dr. Fleming, in examining with his wonted minuteness a number of secondary causes and features of the Scottish Reformation, has perhaps permitted the matter of chief concern to slip from his notice. Such

an impression would be thoroughly unjust. Dr. Fleming knows perfectly well and never loses sight of the main matter. We adjoin a single passage that his point of view may be clear to all: "In those days it was sometimes absolutely necessary that ministers should preach to the times, . . . Preaching to the times was not, however, the main purpose of the pulpit, nor was the high-toned morality which was insisted on. The supreme place was given to the faithful preaching of the Gospel of Christ. . . . The preachers had a definite message, and those who had come through the struggle of the Reformation could not help being in earnest. Knowing from bitter experience what the papacy really was they were anxious to snatch men as brands from the burning. They realized that the Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth—that by it, and by it alone, the heart of a sinner can be purified, his affections cleansed, his flesh subdued, and his mind set on good works." It is in this spirit that Dr. Fleming has written his book; and we may add, that, archaeologist though he is and with his mind set on accuracy and exactness, he has also written it for his own times. It is a notable characteristic of the book that its lessons are not merely left to the reader to be extracted, but are suggested and sometimes even applied. Dr. Fleming wishes us to remember that Rome, whose motto is *semper eadem*, is still with us; and that the Gospel remains the one remedy for the deeper ills of humanity and is a thing worth preserving and a thing which needs constant proclamation and defense that it may live and do its work in the world.

We shall not undertake to speak of the contents of the long series of valuable appendices which Dr. Fleming has added to his book. We have already intimated their value. We do not esteem it superfluous to mention, however, that the volume is provided with a full and useful index. It is admirably printed, and will appeal in form as well as contents to the fastidious taste.

Princeton.

BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD.

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY.

REVELATION AND INSPIRATION. By Dr. REINHOLD SEEBERG, Professor at the University of Berlin. London and New York: Harper and Brothers. 1909. Foolsap 8vo. Pp. x., 135.

Professor Reinhold Seeberg is one of the leaders of that school of recent German thought the object of whose research is a "Modern Positive Theology", or, as Professor Grützmacher, another of its leaders, prefers to phrase it, a "Modern-positive Theology". We are happily relieved from all necessity of explaining to the readers of this REVIEW the nature of this "Modern Positive Theology", by the admirable exposition of it which was given by Dr. C. W. Hodge in the April number. It will suffice now to remind ourselves that, as its very name advises us, it attempts to be at once "modern" and "posi-