

THE PRESBYTERIAN QUARTERLY.

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I. THE LATEST PHASE OF HISTORICAL RATIONALISM.

IN the last number of the QUARTERLY (pp. 36 *et seq.*), we undertook to give some general account of the new historical rationalism which is being now introduced to the American churches by certain enthusiastic pupils of Adolph Harnack; and then, for its better elucidation, began a somewhat fuller exposition of one or two of the more fundamental positions assumed by Dr. A. C. McGiffert in his *Inaugural Address*, in his advocacy of it. We pointed out in that section of our article Dr. McGriffert's conception of Christianity as a development, and gave some account of the "transformations" which he conceives Christianity to have undergone since its origination by Christ. The most important of these "transformations" he represents, certainly with the best of right from his point of view, to be that from the primitive to the Catholic Church, to the better understanding of which his *Address* is devoted. For our better estimation of the significance of his teaching here, we should next consider more closely:

V. DR. MCGIFFERT'S THEORY OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

One of the most striking passages in Dr. McGiffert's *Inaugural Address* is that in which he draws a picture of "primitive Christianity" as it is conceived by him, preliminary to expounding what he calls the momentous "transformation of the primitive into the Catholic Church, of the church of the apostles into that of the old Catholic fathers." That important changes did take place

VIII. CRITICISMS AND REVIEWS.

SHEDD'S DOGMATIC THEOLOGY.

DOGMATIC THEOLOGY. By William G. T. Shedd, D. D. Vol. III. Supplement.
New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1894. \$4.00.

This is the last volume from the pen of the venerable Dr. Shedd, published a few months before his death, and therefore represents the ripest product of his fifty years of theological study and scholarship. In the opinion of the present writer, the three greatest theologians which the American Church has yet produced are Jonathan Edwards, W. G. T. Shedd and R. L. Dabney, and the careful student of the writings of these great masters in philosophy and theology can discern the kinship which exists between their imperial intellects and saintly hearts. Edwards on *The Will*, and the *Religious Affections*, Shedd's *Dogmatic Theology* and *Sermons to the Natural Man*, Dabney's *Theology*, and especially his *Sensualistic Philosophy* are works worthy of a place beside Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*, Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo* and Turretine's *Institutes*, and none of these will ever be outgrown by the progress of metaphysical speculation or theological learning.

Dr. Shedd tells us that "the purpose of the present volume is to elaborate more carefully some of the difficult points in specific unity, partly by original explanations by the author and partly by extracts from that class of theologians who have advocated it. The volume contains an amount of carefully selected citations from works in the Ancient, Mediæval and Reformation periods, and also from the English and Continental divines of the 16th and 17th centuries, that are not so easily accessible, and are an equivalent for a large library of treatises beyond the power of most clergymen and students to possess or have access to. The original matter connected with this endeavors to clear up the obscure features of an actual existence in Adam, and a responsible agency in him." We think that this statement scarcely represents the true contents of this valuable and interesting volume. Only 129 out of the 528 pages are devoted to anthropology, while 160 pages are devoted to theology proper (Trinitarianism), and the remaining topics in a theological system receive considerable attention. One acquainted with the first two volumes of the *Dogmatic Theology* will find no new views advanced, but will find the same views presented in the same style of crystalline clearness, intense energy and severely simple beauty.

Dr. Shedd's system differs from some of the more modern schools of Calvinism in holding to the Augustinian and Elder Calvinistic theology; he agrees with Augustine (though this is unsuccessfully disputed by some), Anselm and Edwards in being a Traducianist. He furnishes the proof that there is just as truly room under the Westminster Confession and in the Presbyterian Church for theologians of the type of R. W. Landis and S. J. Baird, as for theologians of the type of the Hodges and

Thornwell. The present writer thinks Dr. Shedd unduly emphasizes the natural union at the expense of the federal or representative union, while Dr. Hodge unduly emphasizes the representative union, to the neglect of the natural union. We believe that no better statement has ever been made on this subject than Turretine's, which is substantially reproduced in the system of Dr. Dabney, but there is room in the Presbyterian Church for all three schools, the pronounced Traducianist, as was Shedd, the pronounced Creationist, like Hodge, and the theologian who refuses to determine the conflicting claims of Traducianism and Creationism, as we understand Dr. Dabney to do. We agree exactly with Dr. Dabney, but we rejoice that Presbyterian theology has been enriched by the noble works of Shedd and Hodge, and the question as to their relative orthodoxy ought never to be raised. Calvinism, while a distinct, homogeneous, well-articulated system, is not a razor's edge upon which standing is as difficult as passage through the needle's eye, but it is an ample thoroughfare upon which travelers may pass and repass without needing to put their feet down at every step in the same spot pressed by the feet of others. All of the theologians mentioned held with equal clearness to the Calvinistic system, while as independent thinkers they differed upon some points not essential to the integrity of the system.

We propose no extended critique on this volume, but we would be glad to recommend the three volumes constituting Dr. Shedd's *Dogmatic Theology* to the ministers and reading people of our church, for the following reasons:

1. The unequalled excellence of his style. During seven years of his earlier life Dr. Shedd was the Professor of English Language and Literature at the University of Vermont, and his studies there and afterward contributed to the formation of that noble style which gives so unique and great charm to all of his philosophic and theological works. We believe no American writer in the field of philosophy or theology has excelled him in the clearness, force and beauty of his style, and in a certain subtle, vital quality hard to describe, but easily recognized in the products of some minds. Contrast with him in this respect the writings of either the elder or younger Hodge, and the admirable English in which Shedd's system is clothed will, we think, guarantee the life of his *Dogmatic Theology*, when the sound, able, logical and learned treatises of the Drs. Hodge will command attention only from the laborious student of the history of Christian doctrine. There has been very general recognition of this great merit in Dr. Shedd's works by literary writers of the highest eminence, and one of the leading directors of that great institution, Columbia College, told the writer that Dr. Shedd's recognized mastery of the choicest and noblest English had led that institution to seek him on several occasions for its professorship of English Language and Literature.

2. The extent and selectness of his scholarship. His five volumes of translations from the Latin, German and French, and his fourteen volumes of original works, covering a very wide field in theology and philosophy, show the amplitude and grasp of his scholarship. The varied positions he so successfully filled as Professor of English Language in the University of Vermont, Homiletics and Pastoral Theology in Auburn, Ecclesiastical History in Andover, Biblical Literature and afterwards of Dogmatic Theology in Union, New York, together with his work in the pulpit as co-pastor and then successor to Dr. Gardiner Spring, of the Brick Church, show his versatility and the extent of his attainments. There

can be no doubt that he deserves the title of one of the greatest American scholars. The selectness of his scholarship is no less admirable. In poetry, science, literature, philosophy and theology he had obeyed his own advice to his theological students to hold "daily, nightly and everlasting communion with the great authors." His scholarship, while encyclopædic, was of the choicest and most select type. He dared to be ignorant of the lucubrations of many second and third-rate minds, that he might share the thoughts of the great thinkers and scholars of the race. The student who desires to bring his mind into contact with the very best thinking of the recognized masters in all departments of thought can accomplish this end through these volumes better than through any equal number of printed pages with which the present writer is acquainted. That man would have no mean acquaintance with the best thoughts of many of the best thinkers who had thoroughly mastered Shedd's *Dogmatic Theology*. The benefit conferred on the student would be still further increased if the select quotations which Shedd gives him should lead the inquiring student to extend his acquaintance with the authors quoted, and it is certain that he would be introduced to no literature of a low or common order.

3. The profound philosophy underlying his system of doctrine. It is the fashion among shallow and superficial thinkers who, by lack of mental endowments, or on account of the character of their attainments, are incapable of appreciating the profound problem of metaphysics, to decry philosophy as barren of all practical result and certain conclusion. But the greatest minds in the history of thought have been prevailingly metaphysical in their tendency, and these master-spirits have always held a homogeneous system. Plato, Aristotle, Leibnitz, Kant, Reid, and Hamilton, in common with Augustine, Athanasius, Anselm, Calvin, Edwards, and Shedd, hold one philosophic system whose unity is not destroyed by their divergence upon many points of importance, and no man can be a good theologian unless he is first a sound and rational philosopher. There is a profound harmony between the pure teachings of human reason and revelation or the deliverance of the infinite reason of God; and while revelation furnishes the only infallible source of truth, it is the business of the systematic theologian to evince this harmony, to prove that human reason finds the best solution of the standing problem of philosophy in this inspired revelation. We know of no theologian who is more intensely biblical, and at the same time more profoundly rational, than Dr. Shedd. We do not believe it has as yet been given to man to frame statements and explanations which are more satisfactory to reason and to the philosophic mind upon the great subjects of the trinity, the atonement, and eternal punishment, than Dr. Shedd has given us in these volumes. Of course no one would claim originality for him here, for he is building upon the historic doctrines of the church, but we believe him to be in advance of all English theologians, unless it be Dr. Dabney, in showing the intrinsic reasonableness of these doctrines; in justifying them before the forum of the human reason. Such a theology is needed to-day, for while it seems to be a temporary "fad" to depreciate metaphysics, the human mind demands profound and consistent views of truth, and superficial thinkers, whether they call themselves biblical theologians or by some other self-chosen title, cannot satisfy this demand. In fact, there is a philosophy underlying the whole content of revelation; and the rational coördination and systemization of its inspired teachings produces a philosophy just as truly as it

does a theology. Indeed, a theology without a presupposed and involved philosophy is an impossibility. We regard Dr. Shedd's distinguishing merit as a theologian and his certain title to a permanent and commanding influence as found in his masterful and consistent union of philosophy and theology.

4. The conservatism and soundness of his views. Dr. Shedd possessed in large degree the historic spirit, and had little respect for those self-sufficient theologians who imagine themselves able, irrespective of the achievements of the theologians and church of the past, to complete by their unaided efforts the systemization of the doctrines contained in the Scriptures. This author, with the conservatism which a profound acquaintance with the history of the development of Christian doctrine naturally produced, built his own system upon the doctrinal attainments of the past, the Nicene Trinitarianism, the Christology of Chalcedon, the Augustinian Anthropology and the Anselmic and Reformation Soteriology. He was too wise a man to ignore the providential labors of such representative theologians as Athanasius, Augustine, Anselm, Calvin, Turretine, Owen, Howe, and Edwards, those great master-spirits whom God has raised up to give the most accurate and scientific expression to the system of revealed truth. One of the great merits of this great teacher of theology was that his *Dogmatic Theology* was based upon the results of his *History of Christian Doctrine*, and the conviction was wrought in the minds of his students that the Augustinian or Calvinistic system was the combined product of the ablest and saintliest spirits in the history of the church, and this, united in his instructions with the vindication of its intrinsic reasonableness and with the careful biblical exposition which showed it to be the system contained in the Scripture, gave the force of absolute demonstration to its certain and necessary truth.

We do not believe we could do a better service for our church than to induce many of our ministers to enter upon the careful study of this massive product of one of the most imperial intellects and saintly spirits which God has given to his church in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

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THORNTON WHALING.

MILEY'S SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY.

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY. *By John Miley, D. D., LL. D., Professor of Systematic Theology in Drew Theological Seminary, Madison, New Jersey.* Two volumes, 8vo, pp. 1105. New York: Hunt & Eaton; Cincinnati: Cranston & Curtis. 1893 and 1894. \$3.00 per volume.

Learning, philosophy, logic, and skill have each waited upon the author in the production of these volumes. In their mechanical preparation the publishers have delighted the eye of the most exacting reader.

The first volume was reviewed by Dr. B. B. Warfield, in this *QUARTERLY*, July, 1893. In that notice Princeton's distinguished professor said many laudatory things. They ought to have been said. They were neatly said. The merits of the second volume compel their reiteration and extension to the whole work. Dr. Warfield also passed some adverse criticisms upon the volume which he noticed. They had to be passed. They were courteously passed. There is no need of our repeating them.

Dr. Miley is an Arminian. His conscience, his intellect, his heart, are all