

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Expositor* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_expositor-series-1.php

*SURVEY OF RECENT ENGLISH LITERATURE
ON THE NEW TESTAMENT.*

THE Rev. Walter Wynn, in *The Apostle Paul's Reply to Lord Halifax* (Elliot Stock), renders a much-needed service. He takes up the Epistle to the Galatians, and, commenting upon it verse by verse, he shows how at every point it explodes ritualistic and extreme High Church claims. It may here and there offend taste by a certain brusqueness or jauntiness of style, but there is a thread of truth and sense in the exposition which ought not to be disregarded. The difficulty is to find access for such books into the quarters where they are chiefly needed.

Hard Sayings of Jesus Christ: a Study in the Mind and Method of the Master, is the title of a series of sermons by the Rev. W. L. Grane, Bexhill-on-Sea, published by Messrs. Macmillan & Co. They are sensible and lucid expositions of some passages in the Sermon on the Mount and other discourses of our Lord. They may be read with interest and instruction, and they indicate that sounder methods of interpretation are coming into vogue. Mr Grane manifests very considerable skill in penetrating to the spirit of Christ's sayings and escaping the snare of literal interpretation.

The posthumous work of the late Archbishop of Canterbury on *The Apocalypse* has been issued by Messrs. Macmillan. It will not permanently affect the interpretation of that book, but it contains much interesting material, and an occasional flash of insight reveals how serious a study one of the busiest of men had made of one of the most difficult books of Scripture.

The Theology of the New Testament, by Prof. G. B. Stevens, of Yale, forms a notable contribution to Messrs. Clark's International Theological Library. It has the advantage of being written subsequently to the works of Baur, Weiss, Beyschlag, and Holtzmann, and it is more satisfactory than any of them. It is well written, inspiring, candid, and free from all extravagance, either of conservatism or of liberalism. Thoroughly informed, it is also calm, reverent, and independent, singularly free from prejudice, yet alive in every page. It is a great gain to our literature to be in possession of a book which can without reserve be recommended to students.

There comes also from America another contribution to New Testament Theology, which, if not so entirely satisfactory as

that of Prof. Stevens, will yet take a foremost place for skill in arrangement, knowledge of its subject, and strength of treatment. We refer to Prof. Gilbert's *Revelation of Jesus* (the Macmillan Co.). This is one of the most remarkable expositions of the teaching of our Lord that has come under our notice, and will win its way into colleges as a textbook. Its arrangement fits it for this use, and its compact and vigorous treatment of the important topics with which it deals is attractive and serviceable. The doctrine of Christ's person favoured by Prof. Gilbert is scarcely in harmony with traditional beliefs.

Prof. Charles' *Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life in Israel, in Judaism, and in Christianity* (Adam & Charles Black) is a work of importance. It is the result, as we are told in the preface, "of studies begun over twelve years ago, and pursued unremittingly for the past ten." How diligently and with what good fruit Prof. Charles has studied the Jewish Apocalyptic literature the public has reason to know. In this department of research he speaks with an authority no other scholar can claim. The same thoroughness and scientific method which have distinguished his Apocalyptic studies he now carries into the examination of canonical literature. Here, however, it will generally be felt, he too freely ascribes to our Lord the same liability to error which he found characterizing the Apocalyptists. At the same time it must be acknowledged that his treatment of the extremely thorny subject of New Testament eschatology is not only ingenious and rigidly scientific, but also highly suggestive and likely to influence the course of subsequent thought.

Messrs. Black issue another work of considerable interest, Dr. Percy Gardner's *Exploratio Evangelica*, or, as it is described in the alternative title, a brief examination of the basis and origin of Christian belief. Dr. Gardner writes in the interests, or what he believes to be the interests, of Christianity. He is of opinion that by basing itself on history the Christian faith is insecure, while it is quite possible to give it absolute security by building it on a psychological foundation. Unfortunately, Dr. Gardner, in order to make good his contention, has considered it necessary to demolish the historical evidence for the miraculous and for the leading events in the life of our Lord. The criticism by which he attempts this work of destruction will not be homologated by any large body of scholars. And in our opinion his work would have

been more effective, even for his own purpose, had he not excluded historical evidence so completely. Is it necessary to set history and psychology over against one another as alternatives? Nay, is it not incredible that they should be antagonistic?

Pro Christo et Ecclesia is published anonymously by Messrs. Macmillan. Roughly speaking, it is a study of Pharisaism. "If the drama which we call the Gospel is of importance at all, it is surely here that its fullest meaning lies; for this contest between Jesus and the Pharisee is its most salient feature; this contrast between the God-man and the religious purist its warp and woof." But the little book is of wisdom and insight all compact, and it is written in a style of absolute purity. It must be read by all who seek clearer light on our Lord's relation to the religion of His time. It is remarkably instructive and inspiring.

Dr. George Matheson, in his *Studies of the Portrait of Christ* (Hodder & Stoughton), also throws much light on the figure depicted in the Gospels. He selects the most significant incidents in the life, and from them illustrates the method and purpose and character of Jesus. It is a work of genius, with all the rich suggestiveness and a little of the inexactness of such a work.

We have received the *American Journal of Theology*, the *Journal of Theological Studies*, the *Critical Review*, the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, the *Presbyterian and Reformed Review*, the *Jewish Quarterly*, the *Classical Review*, the Quarterly Statement of the Palestine Exploration Fund, *Good Words* and the *Sunday Magazine*.

MARCUS DODS.