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‘CONTENTIO VERITATIS’¹

It has been said that the non-commissioned officers are the ‘backbone’ of an army, and in particular of the British army; and no one familiar with Oxford would hesitate to say that the College Tutors are the backbone of the University system. It is they who are in the closest and most continuous contact with the undergraduates, and who have most to do with the direct moulding of character.

When, therefore, a volume of ‘Essays in Constructive Theology’ appears, by ‘Six Oxford Tutors,’ it is natural that one who is himself concerned with the teaching of theology at Oxford should look upon it with keen interest. He will know how sensitive is the subject with which he has to deal, and he will be eager to learn from the self-revelation of the printed page, which sometimes goes deeper than that of ordinary intercourse, to what sort of hands the teaching of it is entrusted. And it may be not unwelcome to the contributors on their part to learn how their book strikes one who has been himself rather longer in the field.

I do not say it at all by way of disparagement, but the outside observer should not go away with the impression that all, or even the greater part, of the Oxford teaching of theology is exactly of the same colour as that of the ‘Six Tutors.’ They would apparently describe themselves, at least on the subjects on which they have combined to express an opinion, as representing the ‘liberal wing’ of the teaching body. At the same time the

¹ *Contentio Veritatis*. Essays in Constructive Theology, by Six Oxford Tutors (London, 1902).

difference is one that is largely a difference of shades. The writers are justified in claiming, as they do on p. vii of the Preface, 'that "liberal" ideas, which were once characteristic of a very small group of prominent men, have now to so large an extent permeated general Christian thought, that they have ceased to be party watchwords, and have been found capable of harmonious combination with what is permanently valuable in the teaching of other schools.' It is a happy feature of the Oxford teaching that differences are not extreme and are not bitter, and that there are many intermediate gradations between the two ends of the scale.

Still the volume does on the whole represent 'the liberal wing.' And in view of this there will be many who will be glad to see the general attitude and temper of the writers so moderate and self-restrained as it is. Two things have struck me more particularly in their book—and that especially among the less marked and therefore perhaps in a sense more characteristic essays: these are on the one hand a pleasing candour which gives the impression of great sincerity, and on the other hand a certain cheerful optimism which is everywhere more sensible of gain than of loss and which does not take pleasure in the mere act of destroying. The essays are described as 'in constructive theology,' and they are really constructive.

There can be little doubt that three of the essays stand out from the rest. They are the first (by Dr. Rashdall) and the second and last, which are both by Mr. W. R. Inge. The two essays last named have a distinction of style which is an index of real distinction of mind. More than any of the others perhaps they are an original contribution of permanent value to the subjects with which they deal, 'The Person of Christ' and 'The Sacraments.' But Dr. Rashdall's, on 'The Ultimate Basis of Theism,' is also an able, and in many ways helpful, piece of work.

In regard to this essay I have a slightly mixed feeling. With the greater part of it I find myself in warm agreement; but there are one or two things in it with which I should disagree, and there are others which seem to require a rather fuller discussion.

Under the first head, besides those parts of the argument which would be common to all Theists, I would place especially the criticism on an Idealism which is that and nothing more (p. 25), the insistence on the point that, if we are to think of limitations in connexion with God, they are all *self*-limitations or limitations from within (pp. 37, 45), and the frank defence of Anthropomorphism (pp. 32, 42, 46, 49). This last is shared with Mr. Inge who happily expresses it: ‘The human spirit as it ought to be is the World-Spirit in little. What is good and evil to us is good and evil to Him. The cosmic process is a moment or phase of His life, even as our lives here are a moment or phase of our existence as eternal spirits’ (p. 63).

One of the passages that seem to me most open to criticism is that on the doctrine of the Trinity (p. 48). ‘Power, Wisdom, and Will’ surely cannot be a sound trichotomy as applied either to human nature or Divine. Surely Power is an expression of Will and not co-ordinate with it. The common division, Power (or Will), Wisdom, and Love is more to the point. Yet Dr. Rashdall identifies the two triads by what I must needs think a looseness of reasoning. What is said on the doctrine itself is hardly explicit enough to present much that is tangible.

The section on Miracles does not carry me much further. Here, and indeed all through the book, I suspect that the writers do not keep clearly enough apart the view of miracles entertained by the actors in the New Testament history and the historical attestation of miracles in connexion with this view, and the estimate which we are inclined to form of miracles at the present day. I speak of course with all reserve of our Lord Himself: in regard to Him and His view of miracles, we know only so much as He has been pleased to reveal to us. But that He performed, and that some of His disciples—notably St. Paul—performed what were commonly thought to be miracles, I consider absolutely certain. When St. Paul speaks of ‘signs and wonders’ as the marks of an Apostle and as the characteristics of his own ministry (2 Cor. xii 12, Rom. xv 19); and when he speaks again of such signs and wonders as prevalent in the Church (1 Cor. xii 9, 10, 29, 30; Gal. iii 5), it seems to me that we must absolutely take him at his word. And I have equally little doubt that the evidence, when it is all summed up,

is as decisive in a general sense in regard to the miracles of our Lord. The story of the Temptation alone would prove it, because it turns on the power to work miracles, and yet no one of His contemporaries had insight enough to invent that story, if it had not come directly from Himself. And this is only one item among a number that are most strongly commended on grounds internal as well as external.

The real problem is therefore not 'whether miracles happened,' but what exactly we are to include under the term miracle, and how we are to adjust and relate our own conception of miracles with that which was current in the apostolic age.

By far the most conspicuous and the most important subject on which I should desire a rather fuller discussion than Dr. Rashdall has given us is on what I might call 'the question of questions' at the present moment, the ultimate relation of our finite spirits to the supreme Spirit. On this subject Dr. Rashdall and Mr. Inge use rather different language, and indeed seem to be more or less directly opposed. And I must needs think that Mr. Inge's analysis (on p. 76 f) is the more subtle and delicate of the two. It is summed up in the following sentence:—

'The ideal goal which we contemplate and hope for is a state in which our nature and will shall be perfect instruments of the Divine nature and will, but in which they shall remain in a condition of free subordination to the Divine—not abolished or absorbed, so as to lose all possibility of *communion*, nor yet so separate as to admit only of an ethical harmony.'

This language is very carefully guarded, and I am not sure that an understanding based upon it may not be nearer than it would at first sight seem. At least I have noted a number of expressions in Dr. Rashdall's essay which lead me to infer that if he followed up his own thought far enough it would be found to be in harmony with Mr. Inge's. Such, for instance, as these:—

'Indeed, we may say (with Lotze) that the ideal of personality is one which is never fully attained by the human consciousness, and that God is the only being who is in the fullest and completest sense a Person' (p. 33).

'No doubt there is a resemblance, an identity of nature between God and all other spiritual existence, especially in the higher

stages of its development, such as we do not feel to exist between God and any mere object of thought. There is therefore no objection to saying that a human soul is a “spark” or “emanation of the divine,” or a “limited mode of the divine self-consciousness,” or that “human thought is due to the partial communication to the human soul of the divine thought”’ (p. 34 f).

It is true that this is qualified a little lower down. ‘But such expressions must not be used to disguise either the causal dependence of the human soul upon the divine will or the distinctness of God from such souls when once they have appeared.’ These, however, are conditions that neither Mr. Inge nor his allies would have any inclination to deny.

Again: ‘Even inanimate nature is part of the thought of God; He is still more fully revealed in the life of souls—with increasing fullness as animal life passes into the intellectual, moral, and religious life of humanity. . . . Every human soul is an emanation from the divine, a reproduction of the divine. But not all souls represent the divine in equal measure. All who accept the idea of a God who is good must admit that the better the soul and the more profound its spiritual insight, the more fully that soul can be regarded as representing or revealing God’ (p. 48 f).

‘The divine Logos, present in all souls to some extent and in some degree, was pre-eminently present in the human soul of Christ’ (p. 50).

Dr. Rashdall may be invited to define a little more exactly what he means by this presence of the divine Logos ‘in all souls to some extent and in some degree.’ He has just told us that it must be such as to render the human soul capable of at least partially ‘representing and revealing God.’ Would that be possible if the presence were not something more than metaphor?

I wish that I could do justice to Mr. Inge’s two essays, if only as some return for the genuine pleasure they have given me. To read them is like reading poetry of fine quality. The thought not only moves in high regions but it is also constantly touched by generous emotion. There is a special attraction for me in what he has said in both essays as to the adumbrations of Biblical facts and Biblical ideas in pre-Christian and non-Christian civilizations (pp. 64–68, 272–278). The ‘old English verse’

quoted in this connexion (which I seem to remember, but cannot at the moment identify) does honour to our race:—

‘Many man for Cristes love
Was martired in Romayne,
Er any Cristendom was knowe there,
Or any cros honoured.’

And hardly less moving are the pages at the end of the first essay which plead for a considerate and sympathetic judgement of those who have the spirit of Christianity but find the modern world too much for them in regard to the formal acceptance of the Christian creed.

Mr. Inge is a born Platonist, and the merits and charm of his essays are directly connected with his Platonism. But this reminds us of the *ultimum et radicale discrimen ingeniorum*; and we cannot be surprised if he comes a little into collision with minds of a different type. I think that, without meaning it, he has been rather hard on the historical method and its votaries.

‘I do not wish,’ he says, ‘to associate myself with the contempt which has been cast upon the “Old Bailey Theology” of Paley and his school’ [for this concession I am grateful]; ‘but I do wish to impress upon my readers, with all the earnestness that I can, that it is a false method, and that those who rely upon it are trusting to a broken reed, which will pierce their hands as soon as they really lean upon it. The majority of Christians to-day do *not* really lean upon it, whatever they may think; they are Christians because they have found Christ, or rather because Christ has found them, not because they have given the apostles a fair trial on the charge of perjury and acquitted them. The Christ whose claims are made “probable” by such arguments is a dead Christ, who could only preside over a dead church’ (p. 104).

I always suspect that writers who express themselves thus fail to realize the impression made upon minds differently constituted from their own of a multitude of historical particulars, finely graduated perhaps in regard to degrees of proof but with certain fixed points as centres, and all convergent in their ultimate effect and rendering to each other mutual support. In a picture con-

structed by such a method the little facts, the lowly features come by their due—‘the violet by the mossy stone half hidden from the eye’ no less than the great leading ideas. The Christ who is thus imaged, however imperfectly, in the glass of the mind may be a Christ in whom the human side is strongly developed, and it may be through this human side that the imagination seeks to climb up to the Divine, but He is certainly not ‘a dead Christ, who could only preside over a dead church.’ He is at least a Christ who *has lived* a real true moving human life, and not a Docetic phantasm.

I have said above, on the strength of allusions in the writings of St. Paul as well as on the evidence of the Gospels, that the reality of what were at least *thought to be* miracles is to me quite certain. I could not easily conceive anything to be more certain. Life is not made up of propositions of Euclid, but it is made up of convictions which the mind grasps as firmly. This that I have just mentioned is such a conviction; and to me it is luminous. It is one of those ‘fixed centres’ of which I have spoken, round which other beliefs cluster and crystallize. I too should deprecate an ‘Old Bailey’ method; but the method of which Paley was one of the first to set the example, is capable of other applications, and is deserving of a better name.

Apart from this question of principle—for it *is* a question of principle, and there are more disparaging expressions of the same kind scattered about the essay besides the paragraph I have noted—the queries that I should have to put to Mr. Inge are not of great importance, and do not denote any fundamental divergence.

It is very probably my own obtuseness, and what I desiderate is perhaps really supplied in the essay before me; but the following sentence interests me so much, and a fuller expansion of it would be so valuable to me, that I hope Mr. Inge may return to the subject at some future time:

‘The idealistic philosophy of the last century and a half has, we may hope, brought back Christology to its true path by showing us how the Divine and human may be united without confusion and distinguished without separation’ (p. 71 f).

This formulates the problem so tersely and so happily that although I think I can see how the argument of the essay tends

towards its solution, I should be glad to see it worked out rather more explicitly and completely.

Mr. Inge's first essay is to a large extent a review of the history of the Logos doctrine in ancient and modern times. In regard to this I have rather had to ask myself whether the sketch of the history of the doctrine does not make it appear more homogeneous than it really was. Mr. Inge appears to treat the sequence, Philo—St. John—the Apologists—the Christian Platonists, as though it were more direct and in a straight line than I should quite have supposed. The main question of course would be, what is the exact place of St. John in this sequence? In other words, how far does St. John's doctrine of the Logos approximate to that of Philo and coincide with that of the Apologists? The Apologists no doubt took up the doctrine as they found it in Greek philosophy; and with the help, or at the suggestion, of the Fourth Gospel they utilized it for Christian theology. But in doing this how far did they keep true to, and how far did they depart from the model set them in the Gospel? I wish Mr. Inge would make a detailed study of this subject and give us his mature thoughts upon it. As at present advised I am inclined to think that he somewhat exaggerates the resemblances and somewhat minimizes the differences. I should not be prepared to go quite so far as Bishop Westcott on St. John i 1 and say that, 'the term *logos* never has the sense of *reason* in the New Testament.' I think that a rational element is implied in the use of Light in the same context. It does not seem to me wrong to define the Logos as the uttered Mind or Thought or Character of God. But the stress is upon the utterance or projection or revelation. It is true that the content of that which is uttered comes in; but this is the whole nature of God, there is no prominence to the conception of a rationally articulated system, a world of ideas, such as was present to the mind of Plato and the Apologists. The superiority of the Johannean view lies, if I am not mistaken, specially in the fact that St. John escaped the temptation of the Apologists to conceive of the Father mainly as the Absolute, as the highest and most attenuated of abstractions, to be described only by negations¹.

¹ Zahn's two monographs on Ignatius (1873) and Marcellus of Ancyra (1867) are important for this subject.

It is interesting to observe how Ignatius, the writer who is nearest to St. John in time, also presents the closest affinity to his thought. I am not prepared to say that Ignatius necessarily used the Fourth Gospel, but I think that he must certainly have come within the orbit of the teaching of which the Fourth Gospel is the permanent expression.

I have a slight demur to make, somewhat of the same kind, to Mr. Inge's essay on the Sacraments. I have no objection in principle to the influence which is ascribed to the Greek mysteries. I do not doubt that in the later stages of Christian theology this influence was not inconsiderable. But I believe that the readiness to assume influences of this kind is with some writers greater than it should be, and I am not sure that I can altogether exclude Mr. Inge from the number. It seems to me that in such cases it is not enough to note analogies, and then at once to infer that every analogy represents direct influence. In each case the facts should be examined with close attention to dates and channels of communication. If these are adverse, it is better to set down the apparent coincidences, not to direct influence of the pagan institution or practice upon the Christian but rather to like causes in both producing like effects. The difference is not great, but it does affect the total conception.

I should be content to take the three essays that I have so far been discussing as a sufficient *raison d'être* for the whole volume. I could not place the remaining essays at all upon the same level with them. They all, or nearly all, have the pleasing characteristics which I have mentioned (p. 2, above). But they recall to me in different degrees the drawbacks to which a volume of this kind is subject.

One knows what the genesis of such a volume is apt to be. The idea occurs to two or three personal friends or colleagues that a volume surveying some particular field and stating the position of research in regard to that field is desirable. But then they have to look round to make up their number. And whereas in their own case perhaps their materials are ready and the time for their publication is what they would naturally choose, the same cannot be said of the supplemental essays. The writers of these have their subject chosen for them, and they are often

pressed into publishing before they are really ready, before their materials are fully digested or their own opinions matured.

I am also reminded of certain special tendencies of the 'Oxford essay.' It cannot be said that this particular form of composition has quite a high reputation with 'those who know.' I remember well how the late Canon T. S. Evans used to describe Dean Stanley's commentary on Corinthians: 'And every twenty pages or so you come to an elegant Oxford essay—all wrong.' I am far from saying that the essays in *Contentio Veritatis* are all wrong; on the contrary I think that they decidedly tend to be right: at least they decidedly tend to that form of opinion to which I should lean myself. But what the critic of Dean Stanley meant was that the ease and grace of outward form was often not in proportion to the thoroughness and well-considered grounding of the subject-matter.

So in these essays, it seems to me, if I may say so, that the writers have aimed at conveying a sort of average view (not *the* average view, which would require a wide extent of reading and much care to determine, but what might be called a casual average or middle view); and then they give expression to this easily and pleasantly, but without sufficient sense—or at least without *showing* sufficient sense—of what lies on both sides of it and of the objections to which it is exposed.

I rather incline to like best of these remaining essays that on the Old Testament by Mr. C. F. Burney. This essay is not only very clear and readable, but it gives the impression of being based upon accurate study of detail. At the same time, like the rest, it has a certain appearance of slightness, and in this respect hardly does justice to the amount of real balancing of argument that I conceive lies behind it. In particular, when we come to a grave doctrinal question like that of the *Kenosis*, the conclusion seems to be reached rather too easily; one has a feeling that the writer has in view only what has been said upon the subject from the point of view of criticism.

I have little doubt that the least satisfactory of all the essays is that upon 'The Church.' What can be the value of a survey which covers nineteen centuries of Church History in some twenty-seven pages of large print? Naturally a survey of this kind can consist only of the broadest generalizations; and more

unfortunately still, these are for the most part only the conventional generalizations of one side in an age-long controversy.

For instance, take the following:—

‘If we may venture to sum up the characteristics of the Church in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, we should say that, speaking generally, the doctrine of the Church, once a living and growing reality, had become abstract and sterile, while its discipline was decayed. The Church was corrupt in head and members, incapable of interpreting aright its own more profound religious ideas; and yet the more corrupt it grew, the more obstinately and arrogantly did it refuse any concession to the new developments of the religious consciousness and to the growing demand for its own reform’ (p. 261).

This, at a time when the history of the Reformation sorely needs to be re-written in the spirit of the true historian, balancing the scales of right and wrong, of good and evil, with firm and steady hand. I am tempted to place in contrast with the above a like summary by a Roman Catholic writer:—

‘Especially deplorable for us Westerns is the disruption of the sixteenth century. Much as we may be troubled by it, it was not without salutary consequences. The question has often been asked whether a reform of the Church would ever have been brought about without it. This question is not to be answered in the negative unconditionally; otherwise we should have to doubt of the living forces at work in the Church and of its providential guiding. Just as little can it be denied that the Reformation had to be waited for too long, and that it was not introduced until the edifice of the Church had been shaken to its very foundations and a great secession had already taken place. History further shows that the Reformation not only was not accomplished until *after* the secession, but that it was also brought about and hastened by it. So the revival of the Church is intimately connected with its disruption’ (Funk, *Kirchengeschichte*, p. 589).

A paragraph like this will show how summary judgements, when they must needs be passed, ought to be expressed; with what anxious care a writer, even when he is committed to a definite point of view, should yet guard his words, so as to do some kind of justice to his adversaries. There is a great danger

of supposing that summary judgements are easy. They are easy—at the cost of being unscrupulous¹. But to judge summarily, and at the same time with all the needed restrictions and qualifications is a very difficult thing indeed. It is just this that we look to the new school of historical writers to help us to do. I am afraid I cannot say that I receive much help in this direction from the author of the essay.

I remark in passing that he speaks of the Reformation as having brought with it 'new conceptions of the theory of the Church.' It would have been instructive if we had been told what exactly these new conceptions were; e.g. if some account had been given of the discussions as to the relation of the Visible and Invisible Church at the Reformation. But we are told nothing about this, and nothing about anything at all distinctive in the Anglican position.

The two essays on which I have not yet touched both relate to the New Testament. Mr. Wild's on 'The Teaching of Christ' has all the merits of which I have spoken. It is very pleasantly written, and in an excellent spirit. The writer himself has caught a fresh enthusiasm from reading the Gospels with his new guides, and he succeeds in conveying something of this freshness of enthusiasm to his readers. What the essay chiefly wants is more thoroughness—if I may say so baldly—more work.

The impression that the essay gives is superficial. It is just an average view that does not make it clear that it is an average. It frequently uses much-debated data as though only one construction of them were possible.

For myself, I entirely agree that the teaching of Jesus culminates in His Person. Mr. Wild has, I think, done well in working up gradually to this conclusion. But he ought not to do so without a hint of the existence of any different opinion. Harnack's famous lectures were published in 1900, and *Contentio Veritatis* not until 1902. By this time Harnack's book was well before the world, and had caused considerable stir; and there were other phenomena of the same kind. Really what Mr. Wild has done has been to give

¹ This is of course intended only as a general warning. I would not for a moment imply that the writer of the essay would knowingly allow himself to be unjust.

us a sketch of the effect which writers like Wendt have had upon himself personally, and not at all to give us a sketch of the whole present position of research on the subject he has chosen. But this rather detracts from the weight which the volume should carry as representing—or so far as it claims to represent—the teaching of theology at Oxford.

Mr. W. C. Allen, who writes on ‘Modern Criticism and the New Testament,’ has taken a different course. He has evidently put some restraint upon the expression of his own personal opinion and endeavoured to state as objectively as possible the critical position on the various literary problems connected with the New Testament. This essay possesses in a high degree the note of candour, and in a less degree the note of optimism of which I spoke. I should have said that the optimism went a little too far if it were not confined to the presumed *effects* of criticism. In the statement and expression of critical opinion I do not think that Mr. Allen is at all too optimistic. Indeed he makes rather more concessions to the objector than I should be prepared to make.

It is here that the candour of his mind becomes apparent. One can see that he is setting himself to write with independence, to look at things not through the glasses of tradition, but strictly as they are. It seems to me that in the process he has been carried some shades further away from tradition than he need have been.

The effect is perhaps rather heightened by a peculiarity of style. The short, crisp, clear-cut sentences in which Mr. Allen expresses himself sometimes read a little dogmatically, and give an impression of curt dismissal where curt dismissal would not be in place and where I do not think it is intended.

It is akin to this mental habit that statements and contrasts are sometimes (as I believe, unconsciously) exaggerated. An instance will show what I mean. The first paragraph on the Synoptic Gospels begins thus:—

‘The view current in the Christian Church since the beginning of the second century is that St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke wrote independently the Gospels called by their names. This view still has its adherents, but they diminish in numbers daily’ (p. 208).

Which of the ancients has anywhere said that the first three Gospels were written 'independently'? The preface to St. Luke certainly implies that he made use of existing material. And did not St. Augustine expressly describe St. Mark as *pedisequus Matthaei*? One sees, of course, what is meant. It is true that the ancients commonly speak of the evangelists as though each were the author of his own Gospel, and without reference to the materials of which he made use, just as we do. But where they discuss the relations of one Gospel to another they rather imply dependence than the reverse. There is no doubt a difference of critical result, but not quite that strongly-marked contrast which Mr. Allen's words would lead us to suppose.

I cannot help bringing in my personal knowledge of the excellent original work that Mr. Allen has done upon a part of his subject—excellent in method, in objectivity, and in patience. With the thought of this before me I feel that the essay as it stands hardly does justice to its author. I should apply to it the general remark that I made a little while ago. It is published before its time. It is published before the writer has been able to bring his own critical researches to a conclusion, and before he has had the opportunity of applying methods learnt and practised on one part of the field to other parts of it.

The point at which I regret this most is the section of three brief pages relating to the Fourth Gospel. One of these pages, which deals with the external evidence, I may put aside as quite fairly, though summarily, stated. There has been the same effort to write objectively throughout; and if the result is unfortunate, it is not from want of will, but because the data were imperfectly apprehended.

If I might make a guess as to the way in which these paragraphs came to take the shape they bear, I should say that they were probably written under the influence of a group of recent German writers, more particularly Jülicher. At the time when they were written, the memorable work of Bishop Westcott was forgotten. It is a melancholy fact that in the last decade the criticism of the Fourth Gospel has gone backwards and not forwards. There is a less healthy feeling abroad, and a tendency to overlook points that ten years ago were familiar. They have simply dropped out of the current statement of the problem.

Hence I should say that Mr. Allen’s statement of the internal considerations that bear upon the question of authorship turns on one great omission and a *non sequitur*.

The omission is the ignoring of the great mass of evidence which goes to show (1) that the Gospel was written from the standpoint of the inner circle of the Twelve; and (2) that it must have been written by a contemporary who had been himself intimately mixed up with the events which he describes. It would be tempting to launch out into the fuller proof of this; but I shall probably have occasion to do so elsewhere before very long, and in the meantime I may refer to Bishop Westcott’s commentary, pp. v-xxv. } x

The *non sequitur* is in the arguments that are adduced in support of the opposite contention, that ‘the entire representation of Christ’s person and teaching is very different from that of the Synoptic Gospels, and seems to represent a later stage of tradition’ (p. 223). I should demur to the epithets ‘entire’ and ‘very different.’ Some difference no doubt there is; but it should not be overstated. And when it is stated in strict conformity with the facts, I do not believe that it is in the least incompatible with Apostolic authorship. On the contrary, I believe that it positively favours it; for no one was so likely as an Apostle to exercise the freedom which the author has assumed.

I willingly admit that there are signs of late origin in the Gospel; but there are also signs, if not exactly of early origin, yet of an authentic and original relation to the facts. The problem is to combine these two sets of phenomena. They are combined if an Apostle who had companied with the Lord wrote the Gospel towards the end of his life. On no other hypothesis are they combined so satisfactorily; for Wendt’s partition theory is a blind alley; and Harnack’s ‘Presbyter’ will not answer to the conditions.

Mr. Allen asks: ‘Is there not between John the son of Zebedee, the eye-witness of the life of Christ on the one hand, and the Christian philosopher and theologian who wrote this Gospel on the other hand, a gulf in respect of time and thought and relation to historic fact which it is difficult to bridge?’ ‘Yes,’ I would say; ‘it is difficult to bridge on such a presentation of the case as Jülicher’s. But the reason is that the gulf is

artificially widened, and that the hand-marks of John the son of Zebedee are not recognized.' To pursue the metaphor, I might add that the gulf is naturally not to be spanned by a single pier and a broken arch: erect a second pier (the authentic data from the beginning of the Gospel) and carry across the arch (the life of the Apostle), and the bridge is complete.

'Constructive Theology,' as the name implies, is a process and not a finished work. 'Essays in Constructive Theology' is an appropriate title. What we have been discussing are essays or attempts, some of which really build—and the building has beauty as well as strength—while others do not so much attempt to build as register what is being done in the way of building, and do this perhaps rather imperfectly. But all the essays are inspired by a good hope and a good courage.

W. SANDAY.