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Review.



RECENT GIFFORD LECTURES.—II.

*Elements of the Science of Religion.*¹ Part II.: Ontological. By C. P. TIELE. Blackwood, 1899. Price 7s. 6d. net.

*The Philosophy of Theism.*² By A. C. FRASER, LL.D. (Second Edition, amended). Same Publishers, 1899. Price 6s. 6d. net.

PROFESSOR TIELE writes with the amplest knowledge upon the subject of religious beginnings, and the formation and evolution of religious creeds. He does not, however, seem to have grasped in its real fulness the vital element in religion, nor does he lay anything like sufficient stress upon the wholly unique position of the Old Testament in the development of man's God-consciousness. With his examination of the New Testament and of Christianity we have less need to concern ourselves just now; but we may remark that a just recognition of the fact of the claims which Christianity makes for itself, and of the extraordinary nature of those claims, constitute in themselves one of the most profoundly interesting problems with which the professed student of the science of religion has to deal. Yet deal with them he must, in some way or another; otherwise his careful superstructure of theory and of hypothesis is rendered incomplete, and his plan for "explicating" the facts at his disposal—facts which are far too stern and momentous to be set arbitrarily aside—and of unfolding the inward growth of the final stages of man's religious history, falls asunder. We think Professor Tiele has not fully appreciated the position of Christianity as at once an *absolute* and a *revealed* religion. Much indeed of what he says is most generous and admirable; much, too, of his descriptive commentary on Christian idealism is true; but he hardly recognises at its true value the truth that Christianity is no mere form of belief, but the entire surrender of the human heart to the person of Christ—the Christ who lived as a man, died as a man, but rose again, in the power of an endless life, as at once a Divine and human Personality mysteriously yet indissolubly linked in one.

Professor Tiele never once (if we remember aright) alludes to the Resurrection as a historical fact; yet it is on this fact that our faith is built; it is the central doctrine of Christianity; without it "our faith is vain."

We are glad to find the distinguished Dutch professor emphasizing the *essential* character of faith in any right conception of religion; and also the importance of recognising the real union that exists between religion and science, which cannot contradict one another, for are not both religion and science complementary aspects of that Truth of God which contains, while it transcends, them both?

We cannot bring this brief notice of an important series of lectures to a close without calling attention to the second edition of Professor Fraser's admirable work, "The Philosophy of Theism." Replete with the accumulated wisdom of a life-time spent in endeavouring to deepen our knowledge both of philosophy and religion, this book is likely to remain a permanent contribution to the subject with which it deals. It is significant that Professor Fraser has not been content with reprinting the two former volumes which contained his Gifford Lectures. The

¹ Gifford Lectures, 1898.

² *Ibid.*, 1894-96.

truth is, the present "amended" edition has been recast, and to a great extent rewritten. Valuable as it was in its first form, this series of discussions is still more valuable now—alike for the impartial manner in which the veteran thinker has stated the theistic argument, and also for the critical sagacity and power of lucid utterance which inform every page of the volume. Readers will be glad to have the last words of the new preface (dated February, 1899): "The eternal Gospel of Omnipotent Goodness, latent in humanity from the beginning, is unfolded in the Divine human nature of the Ideal Man, and is gradually unfolding in human life and history. And if faith in Omnipotent Goodness, with all that this involves, is the root and spring of human experience and science, no changes in that experience, no discoveries in science, no historical criticism, no future events in history, neither things present nor things to come, can ever show the unreasonableness of this final faith, or deprive the human race of Divine consolation and healing power."

E. H. BLAKENEY.

Short Notices.

Saints and Heroes of Our Own Days. Mrs. T. R. SEDDON. S.P.C.K.

Short, pleasant biographies of General Gordon, Samuel Marsden, Bishop Selwyn, Dr. Livingstone, Alexander Mackay, Father Mathew, General Havelock, Lord Clyde, Archbishop Benson, and Father Damien, for children.

Reconciliation by Incarnation. By D. W. SIMON, D.D. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark. Price 7s. 6d.

IF we are obliged, owing to exigencies of space, to write but briefly on this book, it must not be supposed that we do not realize its value and importance. No book of recent years in which this subject has been discussed, is so careful, so thorough, and—from some aspects of the case—so satisfactory. The central theme of this book is the reconciliation of God and man—that is, as the author emphatically declares, "of God with man as well as man with God." This is not the current popular view, no doubt; all the more, therefore, does it deserve thought and attention. Dr. Simon's book is almost a "body of divinity" in itself; and, if we cannot promise the reader an easy task in studying it, we can assure him that he will not rise from a careful perusal of it without feeling that his horizon has been enlarged, and his knowledge widened and deepened. In saying this, we do not imply that we necessarily accept Dr. Simon's conclusions; indeed, we differ from him in places not a few. But this need not affect our estimate of his book as a whole, which appears to us to be a noteworthy contribution to critical and doctrinal theology.

The Month.

CAPTAIN DREYFUS has been recalled, and the heroic Colonel Picquart has been released from prison, and the army has received accordingly a decisive blow. Yet troubles seem to be thickening for France. The thirty-eighth Cabinet of the third Republic has resigned office, and President Loubet finds it no light task to get a successor to