

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 Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

H.M.S. *Bellerophon* who sent to that society their share of the first division of prize-money (£18 16s.) arising from Nelson's victory in the Battle of the Nile. The B.M.S. most helpfully records the experiences of their Society in the stress of previous wars. During the Crimean War in 1855 the receipts were only £250 short; in 1856, as the war dragged on, the report continues, even though legacies fell off, "taking this difference into account, the Society's income is in excess of the previous year by £1,307 os. 4d." In the following year and during the Indian Mutiny the total receipts were again greater. We echo their wish that our Lord may, in the "very greatness of the time, find an eager and sacrificial response in the hearts of God's people." G.



Notices of Books.

SOME QUESTIONS OF THE DAY. By Henry Wace, D.D., Dean of Canterbury. Second Series. London: C. J. Thynne. Price 3s. 6d. net.

The volume is a reprint of papers by Dean Wace which have appeared in the *Record*. We may safely say that no man living has a wider range of thought, a firmer hold on fundamental principles, and a more pointed way of expressing himself, than the Dean of Canterbury, and anyone who takes the trouble to master the present volume will find himself well equipped for approaching the theological and ecclesiastical questions of the day.

We proceed to enumerate some of the more important conclusions to which the Dean seeks to lead his readers, and we trust that the result will be a desire to study the arguments by which those conclusions are reached. It should be explained that the subjects discussed fall under four heads—namely, questions "National and Ecclesiastical" in general, questions concerning "Convocation and the Church," "Scriptural and Doctrinal" matters, and matters which deal with "Practical Religion."

The first question which is brought before us is the Ulster question. An explanation is given how far it is a religious question and how far it is not. There are strange misconceptions abroad on this point. It is an entire mistake to imagine that there is any desire to dictate to people what religious opinions they should hold. Ulster has all along been strongly Liberal on this point. What Ulster protests against is the usual practice of the Roman Church to dictate to people what religious opinions they should hold, and also the fact that the Papacy has always claimed the further right to dictate to the State what policy it should pursue. The Dean appeals to the recent *Ne Temere* and *Motu Proprio* decrees on these points, and shows that these

utterances involve even claims to decide on the validity of marriage among persons who are not Roman Catholics, and to the right of ecclesiastics to be exempted from subjection to the decisions of civil courts. As everyone knows, this last question was a burning one in this country in the days of Henry II. and Thomas à Becket, and that since the reign of Henry VIII. it has been decided that no such exemption shall be pleaded.

On "Faithfulness to the Church" we are seasonably reminded that the party represented by the E.C.U. is not, and has not for more than fifty years been faithful to the Prayer-Book as it stands, but only to what it is pleased to call "Catholic faith and practice." The word "Catholic," it is important to remember, means, in the mouth of a member of the E.C.U., members of the Roman and the "Orthodox" Eastern Churches, and those members of our own Church who accept the position of the E.C.U. This must be confessed to be in itself a singular "derangement of epitaphs," as Mrs. Malaprop would put it. And when it comes to be added that the "Catholic belief and practice" of the so-called "Catholic party" in our Church is not identical with that of either their Roman or their "Orthodox" brethren, the situation becomes a little confusing to straightforward folk. And as this party deliberately contradicts the formularies of the Church of England as they stand, and has over and over again denied that it is bound by the decisions either of the authorities of the Church to which they belong, or the decisions of its lawfully established Court of Appeal, it is very difficult to see how its claim to membership of the National Church can be sustained. On this point Bishop Beveridge is quoted as saying that the "harmony between the Primitive Church" and our own "is so great that the two can scarcely be distinguished from one another by anything but time."

On the question lately raised by the Bishop of Zanzibar, "For what does the *Ecclesia Anglicana* stand?" the Dean has much to say which deserves close attention. He concludes with the remark that the raising of this discussion "will have done good if it compels the authorities of the Church at home to realize the danger of letting the Church drift helplessly between the currents of Rationalism and Romanism." This is what they are now doing. And he once more reminds the members of our Church of the fact, which for nearly half a century they have been allowing themselves to forget, that the true answer to the Bishop of Zanzibar's question is that, and only that, which was given by "Jewel, Hooker, Cosin, and Beveridge," and by hundreds more sound, learned, and devout members of our Reformed Church.

On the question of the rights of the Church of England laity, we are thankful to find the Dean speaking of the "utterly unsatisfactory nature of their present participation in Church affairs." We wish that his protest had been even more vigorous. Not only is it the fact that of 14,000 inquiries "sent out to incumbents and rural deans," only about half have been returned; but it is matter of experience that the majority of the clergy at this moment are anxious to put obstacles in the way of the free expression of lay opinion. If lay opinion is to be properly ascertained, "inquiries" should be sent, not to "incumbents," but to the people's churchwardens. And the laity should be strongly urged to attend the Easter Vestries and elect churchwardens who represent their views.

We have not space to enter upon the Dean's much-needed criticisms of the extraordinarily reckless action of the Southern Convocation of late, especially with regard to the revision of the Prayer-Book and Church Finance. But we must not pass over the question of Divinity Degrees. Here we are not altogether in agreement with the policy recommended. The Dean tells us that "the friends of Christian teaching in the University are bound to hold fast to any security which remains to us for the authoritative maintenance of Christian belief by the University." "Any security which remains!" But does any security remain? Would it not be better far to let the University go its own "undenominational" way, and establish, as denominations are doing on the Continent, denominational faculties of theology under the control of the Churches themselves? With just a word of thanks to the Dean for reminding us that by the abolition of Church rates the last shred of the old-fashioned lay control of the funds raised for Church expenses passed away, we proceed to say a word or two on his treatment of matters "Scriptural and Doctrinal."

The very serious condition of religious thought among those who arrogate to themselves the sole right to the title of "scholars," and control the teaching of young men at the Universities, is very fittingly dealt with by the Dean. That in the literary and scholastic world the tendency to treat religious questions from a purely intellectual point of view, and that at the present moment a reaction from the over-dogmatism of the Tractarian movement is in full swing, cannot for a moment be denied. But those who look below the surface know full well that the great majority of lay folk have no sympathy whatever with the habit of giving intellectual "stones" to those who are "asking for bread." Among the numerous causes of the abstention from religious worship, which is universally admitted to be characteristic of the present age, one undoubtedly is the extent to which the pulpit is now denying to souls the spiritual nourishment for which they crave. On one side a hard-and-fast dogmatism repels them; on the other, when they ask for information concerning Him Who told men that He was the Truth, they are met rather in the spirit of Pontius Pilate than of Simon Peter's "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of Eternal Life." Certainty on all points we cannot, of course, expect from our teachers. Only the Church of Rome professes to give that, and her profession is a false one. But what the purely intellectual school now in the ascendant offers us is certainty on no point whatever—nothing but the opinion of the professor of the hour, which holds the ground for a short time, and is then succeeded by another, equally barren and equally unsatisfying. We cannot go into the details of the Dean's sketch of the situation. We must refer the reader to his book. There we shall be led to the only ground on which religious teaching can be permanently founded. There we shall learn how hollow are the assumptions on which the case of the intellectualist is based. There we shall see how the bold assertion that "scholars are unanimous" in accepting the theories of the critics is only their way of concealing from themselves and other people the fact that the ground on which they stand is steadily, if slowly, giving way beneath their feet.

RELIGION IN AN AGE OF DOUBT. By the Rev. C. J. Shebbeare, M.A.
London: *Robert Scott*. Price 5s. net.

That this is an age of doubt no thoughtful person will deny. But whether it is more an age of doubt than any other is open to question. The crowd is intensely interested in religious questions, the religious novel is eagerly read, children are seldom withdrawn from religious instruction in our schools, and there are many other indications of the fact that, despite the carelessness of the multitude, there is more latent faith than some suppose. We are therefore, to start with, inclined to quarrel with the title of this deeply interesting but unconvincing book.

We look in vain for any recognition of the fact that "religion," in the case of the Christian, is a miracle of Divine grace. Can a sinner become his own saviour—his salvation being reduced to duty, goodwill, and so forth? According to Mr. Shebbeare, systematic theology must be abandoned, or at least recast. The old teleological argument, dished up with Keswick and garnished with discursive treatment of harmonies of music and art, merges in the future life and the doctrine of the Trinity. Mr. Shebbeare's motto might, indeed, be his own words: "Those whose task it is to commend Christ and His Gospel to the modern world must lack neither intellectual industry nor intellectual courage." But we need to remember that there is still "that which is revealed to babes" and is "hidden from the wise and prudent." Mr. Shebbeare, however, reveres the German philosopher who propounds the theory that Christ is God because we worship Him, not that we worship Him because He is God—His Godhead being purely an *a priori* assumption. There is some really brilliant writing in the book. Perhaps the best specimen of this is the delineation of the personal Saviour, but even this does not redeem it from what are, in our judgment, serious defects.

THE MEANING OF CHRISTIANITY. By Frederick A. M. Spencer, M.A.
Second edition, revised. London: *T. Fisher Unwin*. Price 2s. 6d. net.

This is indeed a storehouse of surprises for the orthodox. On the second page we read that "the account in Genesis of the Creation, however inspiring and religiously valuable, has been demonstrated by natural science to be not in accordance with the facts." This is a statement that it would go hard with Mr. Spencer to prove. Even the most uncompromising Evolutionist sees in the Genesis narrative the confirmation of his theory, for things are on a moving scale, ascending from lower forms of life to higher. How strange to find the Old Book written down and written up in the same sentence!—for how can that which is false be "inspiring and religiously valuable"? We come across the same kind of thing elsewhere, as, for instance, where the author speaks of "the personality which the Bible, with various degrees of truth, makes known to us." The chapter on God is startling: even so far as He is concerned, evolution is still in progress—He has not yet perfected His omnipotence, or evil would cease to be! So, too, as the accuracy of the Hebrew Scripture and so forth may be challenged, we find Christ must be reconstructed, and we are told that "the received conception of the personality of the members of the Holy Trinity cannot be maintained exactly." In suffering Himself to be addressed as "Good

Master" He "incidentally classes His own goodness as among the imperfect kind," and we are told that "such vast scientific and industrial and political progress of man as has since taken place was probably not imagined by Him." Mr. Spencer does not grow less courageous as he proceeds, for he regards the doctrine of the heredity of sinful bias as a monstrosity. Of this alleged "meaning" of the Faith we can only say, "The OLD is better"; and we remember the late Mr. Spurgeon's witty but pungent epigram: "There is nothing new in theology save that which is false."

THE PEOPLE OF GOD: AN INQUIRY INTO CHRISTIAN ORIGINS. By H. F. Hamilton, D.D. Vol. I.: Israel. Vol. II.: The Church. London: *The Oxford Press*. Price 18s. net.

We took up this book with real interest; we put it down with feelings of disappointment mingled, it must be confessed, with admiration for the author's patient erudition, powerful pleading, and altogether excellent temper. We cannot follow him. So far as the first volume and its argument is concerned, has it struck him, one wonders, that if his theory be true, the Bible really possesses but little authority, and no inspiration worthy of the name? The reader is on the horns of a dilemma—he must decide between Dr. Hamilton and the Hebrew Scriptures. The Old Testament gives us an account of the way in which God revealed Himself. Instead of this, we are asked to accept an imaginary account of the way a change took place in human worship from many gods to one God, and the constant reference to Yahvism and Mono-Yahvism and Yahveh is wearying and bewildering.

The second volume, despite the promise of an attractive preface, is as disappointing as the first. Over the desert Dr. Hamilton follows the mirage of Apostolic succession. He wears, metaphorically, coloured spectacles, and seems unable to understand the position of those who differ from him; indeed, his views are clearly held to be *sine qua non*. "Back to the Fathers" is the cry we often hear, and our author does not hesitate to echo it. "Back to the Grandfathers" we heard a well-known preacher once cry—back to the Apostles. Here we are on safer ground. The pity is that Dr. Hamilton relies on those among whom there are diverse opinions, all parties being able to use them to advantage.

THE PENTATEUCHAL TEXT: A REPLY TO DR. SKINNER. By Harold M. Wiener, M.A., LL.B., of Lincoln's Inn. London: *Elliot Stock*. Price 6d. net.

The point at issue between Mr. Wiener and Dr. Skinner involves the very alphabet of textual criticism. And, as Mr. Wiener very fairly contends, before addressing one's self to the literary problem whether the use of the respective names Jehovah and Elohim is characteristic of different writers, one ought to find out first whether the respective names are really to be found in the passages quoted or not. This is a question of textual criticism; and to textual criticism the modern Old Testament critic has never as yet resorted. There are three main sources from which the true text of the Old Testament may be discovered. One of these is the so-called Massoretic text, which was made, not before, but after, the Christian Church was founded; the text in the hands of the translators of the Septuagint in the

second or third century B.C. (the question of the date of the LXX., in spite of the bold assertions of some recent critics, is still *sub judice*); and the text of the Samaritan Pentateuch, which may have been originally made any time between the reign of Hezekiah, when the King of Assyria settled a heathen race in Samaria, to a period subsequent to the Return from the Captivity. This is the question Mr. Wiener discusses, and he comes to the conclusion that the LXX. text was derived from Hebrew manuscripts which were in existence before the Samaritan schism. We must refer the reader to his pages for the arguments with which he defends his position. But he points out that Hassenkamp and the great Hebrew scholar Gesenius, at a certain stage of their investigation, assumed one of the very points which it was their duty to prove. As this has been all along a characteristic of the Old Testament critic, readers will not be surprised to learn that Mr. Wiener complains that Dr. Skinner makes "no direct answer at all" to this assertion. He further "makes concessions," Mr. Wiener declares, "which appear to destroy Gesenius' view altogether." Next, Mr. Wiener goes on to show that the Massoretic text is not "confirmed," as Dr. Skinner further contends, "by the Vulgate." He goes on to argue that Origen and Jerome seem to have had before them "various other texts"; that the Massorites not only had "a single imperfect archetype" before them, but that this archetype was "deliberately altered on non-critical principles" (of which we have one out of many examples in the well-known correction made in Ps. xxii, 17); and that "the Egyptian tradition"—that on which the LXX. was based—was "separated from the Palestinian before the Samaritan." It is clear from all this that Old Testament textual criticism is at present in its infancy, and that, as Mr. Wiener puts it, "the issues now involved touch not merely the Divine appellations but the whole problem of the text, and it is already certain that the old views which have done duty for so long will be challenged all along the line." So that instead of "the assured results of modern scientific criticism," of which we have heard so much, we find ourselves face to face with the fact that the axioms and postulates on which scientific criticism depends for its results are just being laid down. J. J. LIAS.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF CHARACTER. By Albert D. Watson. London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd. Price 4s. 6d. net.

"Lessons in the Life of Jesus" is the sub-title of this delightful volume of short chapters or readings on *the* Life of lives. The list of contents, carefully analyzed, shows that the whole range of the Redeemer's life is covered. There is no attempt to draw upon the imagination or to explain away what is written. On the Resurrection, for instance, there is clear and definite teaching, and, although the matter is not discussed critically, Mr. Watson says: "To my mind, no fact of history is based on a surer testimony than that Jesus was seen alive after His death on the Cross." The conclusion, summed up in four pages, is worth the whole book. The chapters are short, and would be most useful for reading at family prayers.

THE SANCTITY OF CHURCH MUSIC. By the Rev. T. Francis Forth, B.A. London: J. and J. Bennett, Ltd. Price 2s. 6d. net.

This book is really much more than it pretends to be. It is not merely a dissertation on the sanctity of Church music; it is a brief but careful

history of the subject. However much we may differ from some of the author's opinions, there are some points upon which he will find many to agree with him. Is it not too true that, as he says, "music in the Church has developed beyond all bounds, so that the people's part is not only reduced to a minimum, but in some churches seems to be extinct"? He rightly objects to the introduction of *Kyries*, "which it is practically impossible to sing congregationally" in obedience to the rubric, which directs that "*the people . . . shall ask God mercy for their transgression.*" "Is it not possible," the writer asks, "that Church music, reading, and rendering should be taught as necessary subjects of the general curriculum at those colleges which profess to train men for the ministry?" This is indeed a pertinent question, and if Mr. Forth's book directs attention to it many will be grateful.

CHALLENGE AND CHEER. By the Rev. J. Warschauer, M.A., D.Phil.
London: *Robert Scott*. Price 3s. 6d. net.

These Sunday studies in week-day religion are of a high order. They are characterized by deep spiritual insight combined with a wide outlook and a knowledge of human nature. In some of them the preacher boldly leaves the beaten track—without, however, forsaking the old Evangel, which is ever to the fore. For example, he illustrates a sermon on "The Value of Effort," based on St. Paul's words, "This one thing I do," from Browning's "Grammarian"; while another on "Man in Search of his Soul," with our Lord's question, "What shall it profit a man?" as the text, is skilfully and effectively built up on Ibsen's "Peer Gynt." They are indeed sermons that were worth listening to, and were well worth printing.

Publications of the Month.

[The brevity of the following list is a striking indication of the havoc the war is working with the publishing season.]

- PARABOLIC GOSPEL, THE :** of Christ's Parables, a Sequence and a Synthesis. By the Rev. R. M. Lithgow. (*T. and T. Clark*. 4s. net.)
- WHEN WILL OUR LORD RETURN?** Prophetic Times and Warning Events. By Harold Norris. (*C. J. Thynne*. 1s. net.)
- SEEDS SCATTERED BROADCAST,** or Incidents in a Camp Hospital. By S. McBeth. Third Edition. (*C. J. Thynne*. 1s. 6d. net.)
- REGENERATION OF NEW CHINA.** By Nelson Bitton. With Introduction by the Rev. Lord William Gascoyne-Cecil. (*C.M.S.*, 2s. net.)
- ROAD-MAKING FOR THE KING.** The Story of South Street Mission, Hammersmith. By Sister Lizzie. Second Edition. (*Morgan and Scott, Ltd.* 2s. net.)
- SUPPLEMENT, THE.** A collection of Hymns and Tunes specially designed as a supplement to any Hymn-Book. (*Morgan and Scott, Ltd.* 2s. 6d. net.)
- SOPHIA.** By Stanley Weyman. **THE POTTER'S THUMB.** By Flora Annie Steel. (*T. Nelson and Sons*. 7d. net each.)

