

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

for mistakes which have existed uncorrected since LXX time. But they provoke it themselves by their novel Procrustean method of treating Holy Scripture. In former times it has been the practice continually to mend the errors of the LXX translation. The Vulgate, Pagninus, and all following translators and commentators have kept improving one upon another. That there is room for further improvements I have shown in the article referred to. But it is the pride of the newest school to inaugurate rather a different system—a system of overthrow and rejection of the original.

As for the critical edition of the Hebrew text which I seem to have been guilty enough not to consult, I am far from convinced that the text of Isaiah existed at the time when I wrote my article. Even so late as the fourth of this month there was no copy of it in the British Museum Library. Moreover, if it had existed, it would have made no difference, for it is only the Hebrew text manipulated in the same manner as the English without an authority from any ancient MSS. or version. I consider, therefore, that a review of the English Polychrome applies with equal force to the Hebrew Polychrome, and contains more than can be applied to the latter.

E. FLECKER.

Fishlake Vicarage, Doncaster.



Reviews.



Some Aspects of Primitive Church Life. By WILLIAM BRIGHT, D.D.,
Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History, and Canon of Christ
Church. Pp. vii., 268. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1898.
Price 6s.

EVERY movement to recover for the English clergy their ancient attribute of learning, which they are at present, it would seem, in a fair way to lose, deserves the gratitude of those who love the Church of Christ in their land; and of recent efforts in this direction none is more practical and promising than the lectures annually delivered in the long vacation at one or other of the great Universities. It is a cause of real regret that they are not more widely appreciated and better attended, especially by the juniors. What their loss is who could but will not use the opportunity, is plain from such a volume as this, Dr. Bright's last gleanings in a field where he has so long and so successfully laboured. His first work on Church History bears date 1860. But while the book before us makes sensible the loss, at the same time it goes far to make it good, and we wish that other of the lecturers, among whom are the best teachers of the day, would follow this example and obligate a larger audience with the printed page than it is possible for spoken words to reach.

The name of the book and of its writer are in themselves sufficient warrant of its interest and value, and where Dr. Bright keeps closely to the title the result is delightful.

The picture of the workaday life of the early Church, with its interests

and dangers, its difficulties and happiness, is drawn with the ease and skill that proclaim the master hand. We know of no better account of the Apologists than that which is given in Lecture V. Their points of difference are stated with a clearness that forbids all possibility of confusion, while proper prominence is given to the factor common to the best of them, that by which their work will live until the last and universal triumph of the faith they championed. It is difficult to doubt that Justin and Origen and the writer of the Epistle to Diognetus soon came to see that, while the appeal to prophecy and type and the analogy of Nature have their value, the best defence of Christianity is the Person of its founder and "the moral effects produced by His Gospel—that is, by His living presence and energy in the hearts and lives of men." This ennobling power of the "thought of Christ" is, of course, fully realized by Dr. Bright, and he recurs to it again and again; it evokes a true note of eloquence in one passage especially, which is too long to reproduce in its entirety, and too beautiful to present in fragments. See Address III., pp. 147-152.

The first address is not so much an aspect of Church life as a vigorous, though not a polemical, exposition of what may be called the conservative view of the origin of the episcopate. Dr. Hort's "Ecclesia" supplies the occasion. It is, we suppose, inevitable that this posthumous publication should awaken the mistrust of the important school of thought of which Dr. Bright is the honoured representative, but we cannot but feel that such suspicion is ungrounded, and springs from an imperfect acquaintance with the real mind of the great Cambridge theologian. His attitude toward Church order may best be gathered from the words in which one of Dr. Hort's most distinguished disciples, Canon J. A. Robinson, defended his master's memory against a criticism of just the points which Dr. Bright discusses. "What Dr. Hort . . . taught us, or, in so far as it was not new . . . specially emphasized for us . . . that Church order is from the beginning a sacred growth, directed by the constant presence within of the Holy Spirit, so as to meet the needs of a living and multiplying society; that it is not a scheme delivered by the Lord to the Apostles, and by the Apostles to the Church; that the Body of the Christ is an organism rather than an organization; that here, as elsewhere, life has its inherent law of orderly evolution; and that the most fruitful lesson of modern Biblical criticism is this: that in the consideration of all these topics we connect more closely than ever before our belief in the Holy Ghost and our belief in the Holy Catholic Church" (*Guardian*, March 9, 1898).

The motive of the mistrust which we deprecate is no doubt the fear lest a sword should be furnished to the Church's enemies by her own children. It may be that Dissenters find what they think are wide concessions in the "Ecclesia," just as they did in Lightfoot's famous "Essay on the Christian Ministry"; but the weapon has a double edge. That men like Hort and Lightfoot, who are glad to face the truth at any cost

and blink no facts, should, while conceding all that their learning and their scholarship marks as uncertain or untenable, yet hold with passionate conviction the theory of a divinely appointed order is surely strong proof of the soundness of our triple cord.

Dr. Bright, it is hardly necessary to say, is no mere ecclesiastical antiquary; he writes with an eye to present questions, and in his second address touches the vital problem of our time, viz., the share of laymen in the government and organization of the Church. His opinion is that there is no basis in catholic custom for allowing them an active membership of synods. "Influence without membership" is the phrase with which he summarizes the primitive relation of the laity towards these assemblies which "properly consisted of Bishops alone." There is surely room for question here. The statement holds of Cyprian, but can it be thus confidently asserted of all cases? On the whole subject see a valuable pamphlet by Rev. H. C. Powell, "The Church Crisis," Longmans, 1899, price 1s.

It will be seen that we do not unconditionally assent to all the contentions of the volume; but this will not, we hope, have a deterrent effect upon any subscriber to the *CHURCHMAN*. To read a book with which we are in complete agreement is often but a kind of self-indulgence and a waste of time, and the hours spent with Dr. Bright are never that. We may look at "some aspects" of history with other eyes than his, but that does not lessen our affection for the writer nor our sense of the great debt under which he has laid us all by his voice and pen for more than a generation.

The Ritschlian Theology: Critical and Reconstructive. An Exposition and an Estimate. By Rev. A. E. GARVIE. T. and T. Clark. 1900. Price 9s.

This admirable and timely work owes its inception to a proposal of Dr. Fairbairn that Mr. Garvie should deliver a course of lectures at Mansfield College, Oxford. The lectures were duly given during Dr. Fairbairn's temporary absence (in India), and are now published in order to appeal to a wider circle of students. The writer has not, he tells us, designed his book for theological scholars who are familiar with German; nor does he regard his book as an exhaustive and systematic account of the Ritschlian theology; he intends the work as a substantial help to those students who, realizing the far-extended influence of Ritschl and his school, are anxious seriously to understand the position of the Ritschlians, and to draw their own conclusions after careful study of their writings. Accordingly Mr. Garvie has, so far as was possible, allowed Ritschl and his followers to speak for themselves. His book is, above all things, an *exposition*. He says truly (Preface, p. viii) that, inasmuch as the Ritschlian theology seeks, honestly, if imperfectly, to win men beset by doubt for Christian faith, it deserves to be kindly as well as justly and truly treated. Taken in conjunction with Professor Orr's masterly little work, "The Ritschlian Theology" (Hodder and Stoughton, 1898),

Mr. Garvie's more elaborate treatise ought to put the student into thorough touch with the dominant ideas cherished by the Ritschlian school of thought. Briefly—to compare Evangelical theology with this new product of German idealism—we may say that, while Evangelical theology constantly endeavours to keep in actual touch with the fact of a living Christ, the Ritschlian theology, despite its honesty of aim, constantly tends to sink back into the sphere of *representative*, not actual, truth. At the same time, the tenets of the new school have influenced German thought so widely, and that influence has been, in some directions, so good, that we gladly welcome any clear exposition that will enable us to understand the position of Ritschlians. Such an exposition we find in Mr. Garvie's valuable work. E. H. B.

Short Notices.

Confirmation and Communion; or, The Royal Priesthood and its Offering.
By G. H. WHITAKER, M.A., Examining Chaplain to the Bishop of Truro. S.P.C.K. Pp. 118.

THESE eighteen brief instructions comprise six addresses entitled "The Royal Priesthood," and twelve under the title of "The Offering of the Royal Priesthood." The first series would serve as an excellent devotional accompaniment to the work usually gone through in preparation for Confirmation, and the second presents us with a quite admirable exposition, practical and spiritual, of the Communion Office. We hardly know a small book more likely to be of service during the weeks immediately before and after Confirmation. Canon Whitaker does not give one the impression of any particular "school" of Churchmanship. Certainly these positive and winsome addresses display no token of partisanship.

The Sixfold Trial of our Lord, and The Prayers of Christ. By the late Rev. G. E. BROADE, M.A. Elliot Stock. Small crown 8vo., cloth. Pp. 76. Price 2s. 6d.

These two courses of Lent lectures, though they have a good literary quality and a certain calm earnestness and an instructive manner in common, are in some respects in striking contrast. Some of the "Trial" series—most of them—refrain from exhortation, and merely paint with fresh fidelity a picture which is to be mused upon. But the addresses on "The Prayers of Christ" add application and appeal to the portrayal and analysis of situations. Both courses give one an impression of reverent control of emotion.