

THE PRESBYTERIAN QUARTERLY.

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I. THE LATEST PHASE OF HISTORICAL RATIONALISM.

IN the last number of the QUARTERLY (pp. 36 *et seq.*), we undertook to give some general account of the new historical rationalism which is being now introduced to the American churches by certain enthusiastic pupils of Adolph Harnack; and then, for its better elucidation, began a somewhat fuller exposition of one or two of the more fundamental positions assumed by Dr. A. C. McGiffert in his *Inaugural Address*, in his advocacy of it. We pointed out in that section of our article Dr. McGiffert's conception of Christianity as a development, and gave some account of the "transformations" which he conceives Christianity to have undergone since its origination by Christ. The most important of these "transformations" he represents, certainly with the best of right from his point of view, to be that from the primitive to the Catholic Church, to the better understanding of which his *Address* is devoted. For our better estimation of the significance of his teaching here, we should next consider more closely:

V. DR. MCGIFFERT'S THEORY OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

One of the most striking passages in Dr. McGiffert's *Inaugural Address* is that in which he draws a picture of "primitive Christianity" as it is conceived by him, preliminary to expounding what he calls the momentous "transformation of the primitive into the Catholic Church, of the church of the apostles into that of the old Catholic fathers." That important changes did take place

6. Both apostles coincide closely as to the doctrine of faith. It is mystical, and not merely formal, with both. Paul associates it with such phrases as "in Christ," "dying with Christ," and "newness of life"; John associates it with "abiding in Christ," "living through Christ," and "eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of God." With both faith is a "new life-force."

7. Both apostles magnify the love of God. "For Paul, love best summarizes that which is perfect; it is the very essence of goodness"—the law and motive-principle of human life and conduct. John goes beyond Paul in representing love as "the law of the divine nature as well as of the human—a universal principle or law of being."

Our author concludes that Paul and John supplement each other in many particulars. We may add that the same is true in respect to all writers of Scripture, and that the recognition of this fact shows the superiority and greater safety of the systematic method as compared with the biblical.

The *Johannine Theology* is the product of a very high grade of scholarship, exceedingly entertaining, full of instruction, but too divergent from orthodox interpretations to be entirely safe and satisfactory throughout.

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COCKE'S STUDIES IN JOHN'S EPISTLES.

STUDIES IN THE EPISTLES OF JOHN : OF THE MANIFESTED LIFE. *By A. R. Cocke, D. D., Author of "Studies in Ephesians," Etc., Pastor at Waynesboro, Va.: Professor of Philosophy in the Valley Seminary.* Richmond, Va.; Presbyterian Committee of Publication; 1895. Pp. 159.

A little over two years ago Dr. Cocke published his *Studies in Ephesians*, and a few months later he issued two pamphlets on *Immersion in the Bible*. The former of these showed him to be a clear and devout expositor of Scripture, and the latter evinced him to be a fair and effective controversialist. These publications also gave good promise that we might expect something even better from his pen, and we have pleasure in saying that the volume before us goes far to fulfil this promise.

For the "Studies" in this volume Dr. Cocke has chosen those precious passages of Scripture, the Epistles of John. These Epistles are simple, tender and devout, and at the same time lofty, profound and difficult. It was, therefore, no ordinary task which our author ventured on when he took up these Epistles for a series of "Studies" rather than for a continuous exposition. To say that he has succeeded well is to render real praise to his work. Its exposition is careful and correct, its literary style simple and lucid, and its tone is spiritual and devout. To read the book will minister strength and comfort to heart and life.

In the volume there are nine studies or chapters. Seven of these are founded on the first Epistle, and these are followed by a single one based on each of the other Epistles. In this way the whole ground of the Epistles is covered in accordance with the author's plan.

The titles of the studies are as follows: Fellowship, Tests of Fellowship, Degrees in Life and Fellowship, Character of the Life in God's Children, Confidence and the Holy Spirit, "Let us Love one Another," The Testimony Concerning Eter-

nal Life, The Second Epistle of John, The Third Epistle of John. These titles, though quite comprehensive, give but little idea of the real scope and contents of the discussions, for every chapter is rich with thought.

The sub-title—The Manifested Life—gives the key-note to all the studies, and leads our author to unfold the deep underlying truths of the Epistles. The chapters on Fellowship and its Tests illustrate this. Fellowship has its foundation in a manifested life, fellowship reveals the character of the life, and the manner in which this fellowship is revealed. The tests of fellowship are keeping his commandments, walking as he walked, and loving our brethren. Each of these points is well worked out.

The degrees of life and fellowship are developed from these words, "I write unto you fathers," "I write unto you young men," "I write unto you little children." The life and character of God's children is expounded along such lines as these: Righteousness in being and in act is one of the forms in which the divine life unfolds itself, the true children of God will love one another, and in various particulars these two lines are opened up.

Under the Confidence of the Holy Spirit, the filial, prayerful spirit is enlarged upon, and the indwelling, renewing Spirit abides in them ever. From the words "Let us love one another" we have one of the very best studies in the series. The love of God in Christ is the great motive prompting our love to God and for one another. The testimony concerning eternal life leads our author to speak of the witnesses, the reception of the testimony, and the testimony itself. This is twofold: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. In this connection the truth is well brought out that the believer may have this full assurance, though all may not as a matter of fact possess it. It is their privilege, but may not be their possession.

The chapters on the Second and Third Epistles are brief, but practical and very readable. We can make no attempt to give even an outline of them in the space at our disposal.

We congratulate the author on his good work, and we rejoice in the clear evidences which this volume affords of his ability, learning and devout spirit. We congratulate the congregation that sits under such ministration of the word, and do not wonder that they are a people who are intelligent, and liberal in their gifts to the Lord.

It is a matter of cheer also to find one and another of our younger ministers devoting themselves with marks of ability and scholarship to biblical studies. This gives good promise that our church will not want for men to maintain her standard of learning and devotion in the Master's service.

We only add that for devotional reading this book is admirable, and should have a place in Sabbath-school libraries. The publishers have done their work well in every respect.

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BRIMM'S MAN AND THE BIBLE IN THE LIGHT OF REASON.

MAN AND THE BIBLE IN THE LIGHT OF REASON. *By William Waldo Brimm.*
Franklin Printing and Publishing Company, Atlanta, Ga. 1894.

This volume is from the pen of one of the Presbyterian ministers of the Synod of Georgia, and will attract attention on the patriotic ground of special interest in