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I.

INSPIRATION.

THE word Inspiration, as applied to the Holy Scriptures, has gradually acquired a specific technical meaning, independent of its etymology. At first this word, in the sense of God-breathed, was used to express the entire agency of God in producing that divine element which distinguishes Scripture from all other writings. It was used in a sense comprehensive of supernatural revelation, while the immense range of providential and gracious divine activities concerned in the genesis of the Word of God in human language was practically overlooked. But Christian scholars have come to see that this divine element, which penetrates and glorifies Scripture at every point, has entered and become incorporated with it in very various ways, natural, supernatural, and gracious, through long courses of providential leading, as well as by direct suggestion, through the spontaneous action of the souls of the sacred writers, as well as by controlling influence from without. It is important that distinguishable ideas should be connoted by distinct terms, and that the terms themselves should be fixed in a definite sense. Thus we have come to distinguish sharply between Revelation, which is the frequent, and Inspiration, which is the constant attribute of all the thoughts and statements of Scripture, and between the problem of the genesis of Scripture on the one hand, which includes historic processes and the concurrence of natural and supernatural forces, and must account for all the phenomena of Scripture; and the mere fact of Inspiration

and its special relations as primate of the Established Church of England, and the first Protestant Episcopal prelate in the world. But he is none the less loyal to his Divine Master, to supernatural religion, to Evangelical doctrine, and to his Christian brethren of all communions.

It is a happy thing for the whole Protestant world, when its largest and most powerful division is presided over by a chief bishop so good and so wise.

A. A. HODGE.

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE SECOND GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE PRESBYTERIAN ALLIANCE, Convened at Philadelphia, September, 1880. Printed by direction of the Council. Edited by JOHN B. DALES, D.D., and R. M. PATTERSON, D.D. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Journal Company. pp. 1154. \$3.00.

This volume is a credit alike to the whole Presbyterian Church and to the editors selected by the Council. They have accomplished their very arduous work with great fidelity and discretion. The volume is clearly and accurately printed and illuminated with excellent chromo-lithograph copies of the historical decorations blazoning the shields, mottoes, and chief heroes and events in the past of the great foreign Presbyterian Churches, designed by the Rev. Henry C. McCook, D.D., the originals of which, painted on canvas, covered the walls of the Horticultural Hall during the sessions of the Council.

There is, however, one monstrous defect in the make-up of the volume, in the total absence of any real table of contents, or clue of any kind, to the contents of the volume. The index is of some service in finding a subject which is already known to be embraced in the volume. But its contents, subjects, authors, etc., can be discovered only by a most laborious detailed search through the pages. The heading of the pages from beginning to end are "Presbyterian Alliance," and "Second General Council," facts which every reader knows when he first takes up the book, and which he does not need to have reiterated on every page. If, at every opening of the book, the left-hand heading had stated the subject of the Essay, or Report, or Discussion, and the right-hand heading had stated the special subject of those pages, the usefulness of the volume and the convenience for the reader would have been many times increased.

As a whole, the contents of this volume are of great permanent value. The discussions of topics of current interest presented in the Essays are doubtless surpassed elsewhere. But much of the matter is new and of the highest interest. The most important elements are such as: I. Reports as to the present state of Religion in Germany, Moravia, France, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Italy, and Spain, by such men as Prof. J. G. Pfeiderer, Adolph Monod, Fisch, Réveillaud, Buscarlet, Fliedner, and Comba. These, together with special reports as to the present attitude of the "Conflict of Faith and Rationalism" in Holland, by Van Oosterzee; "Rome and the School Question" in Belgium, by Leonard Anet; and the "Conflict of the German Empire with the Pope," by Dr. William Krafft. II. Statistical Reports, brief, but comprehensive, and in the main accurate, of all the Presbyterian bodies in the world. III. Statistical Reports as to the present condition of all the Foreign Missions of the various branches of the North American Presbyterian Churches. IV. The Report of the Committee on Creeds and Formulas of Subscription presents the most complete statement of facts on this subject ever before collected. The Committee sent the following questions, by the direction of the Edinburgh Council, to officials or other representative men in all the Presbyterian Churches of the world:

"1st. What are the existing Creeds or Confessions of your Church, and what have been its previous Creeds or Confessions, and what modifications of these, and the dates and occasions of the same, from the Reformation to the present day?"

"2d. What are the existing Formulas of Subscription, if any, and what have been the previous Formulas used in your Church in connection with her Creeds and Confessions?"

"3d. How far has individual adherence to these Creeds by subscription, or otherwise, been required from ministers, elders, or other office-bearers respectively, and also from the private members of the same?"

The answers to these questions have come up from all sections of the Presbyterian world, and have been furnished by the most competent informants in each case. They are given generally with great fulness, presenting in outline the confessional history of each Church in the past, and of all the essential facts as to the Creeds professed, and as to the sense and extent to which they are professed at the present time. In its own department this "Report," which is here printed in full, has no rival, and every student of either the religious or simply the ecclesiastical history of this age should study it.

A. A. HODGE.

THE GENTLE HEART: A Second Series of "Talking to the Children." By ALEXANDER MACLEOD, D.D. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers.

Many will remember Dr. Macleod's paper on "The Children's Portion in the Sabbath Service," read before the Presbyterian Council at Philadelphia. It was warm and tender, and showed throughout the fresh enthusiasm of a heart in love with children. The paper revealed Dr. Macleod in theory. This book, "The Gentle Heart," reveals Dr. Macleod in practice. Here is the man doing the very thing about which he talked before the Council.

He advocated "sermon stories," and this little book is crowded with them. They are drawn from all fields. The Scriptures supply a goodly portion. But history, biography, city, country, personal observation, daily practical life—all furnish the illustrative incidents that make up the different talks in this book.

The author handles them well. His style is clear and simple. He scarcely trips anywhere in the use of words beyond the reach of ordinary children. He is neither profound nor silly, striking that happy mean which shows that with him talking to children is neither a question of up or down, but of adaptation.

The stories are moral, and yet they do not set forth "an impossible morality." They are "brimful of life" without being exaggerations of vitality or a breezy manliness. They are vividly put before the hearers. It is easy to see how *attention* could be kept by a genial lover of children with stories like these told in this way.

The one defect that we discover is here and there a *want of spiritual application*; or perhaps it were better to say, the use of a story which hardly permits a spiritual application. "Above all," says Dr. Macleod in his paper, "the stories ought to have in the heart of them some fair vision of God." Now some of the stories in "The Gentle Heart" are wanting just here. They are stories of fortitude or bravery or kindness that suggest nothing above the plane of the natural. There is no Christ in them; no "fair vision of God" in them; they are born of natural affection—of the earth, earthy—like Charles Dickens' angels of innocence. There is danger of their leaving the children with the impression that a deed of heroism or of self-denial is necessarily Christian—and that, as John Hays has it in one of his Pike County ballads—

"Christ ain't a-going to be too hard  
On a man that died for men."

But in the main the stories are charmingly adapted to convey Christian truth, and to put the children in love with ways that are Christ-like.

HERRICK JOHNSON.

THE CUP OF CONSOLATION; or, Bright Messages for the Sick-Bed from the two great volumes of Nature and Revelation. By an Invalid. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers.

This book consists simply of "a series of texts from Scripture, followed by