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I.

MILTON AND TENNYSON.

“ Blessings be with them and immortal praise,  
Who gave us noble lives and nobler cares,  
The Poets, who on earth have made us heirs  
Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays.”—WORDSWORTH.

**T**WO rivers, rising in the same lofty region and fed by kindred springs, are guided by the mountain-slopes of their environment into channels which, though not far apart, are widely different. The one, deeper and stronger from its birth, after a swift and lovely course through fair uplands of peace, is shattered suddenly by the turmoil of a fierce conflict, lifting but one foam-crested wave of warning, is plunged into the secret and tumultuous warfare of a deep cañon, emerging at length with wondrously augmented current, to flow majestically through a land of awful, thunder-riven cliffs, towering peaks, vast forests, and immeasurable plains,—a mighty land, a mighty stream. The other river, from a source less deep, but no less pure and clear, passing with the same gentle current through the same region of sweet seclusion, meets with no mighty obstacle, is torn by no wild cataract in its descent, but with ever-growing force and deepening, widening stream sweeps through a land less majestic, but more beautiful, not void of grandeur, but free from horror,—a land of shadowy vales and gardens; mysterious cities hung in air, and hills crowned with ruined castles,—a stream brimming and bright and large, whose smooth, strong flow often conceals its unsounded depth, and mirrors, not only the fleeting shores, but also the eternal stars, in its bosom.

Such is the figure in which I see the poetry of Milton and of Tennyson flowing through the literature and life of our English race.

sional obscurity of the style, the work is well done, the argument upon the whole worthy of confidence, and the book adapted to accomplish the very excellent purpose the author had in view.

A. A. HODGE.

THE FREEDOM OF FAITH. By THEODORE T. MUNGER, author of "On the Threshold."

"Peace settles where the intellect is weak;  
The faith heaven strengthens where He moulds the creed."

—WORDSWORTH.

Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co. 1883.

This is a volume of sermons from a Congregational minister settled in Western Massachusetts, of a well-deserved high reputation for intellect, scholarship, and literary skill. These sermons are well worthy of the very considerable attention they have received as specimens of the new kind of sermonizing in which is followed the theory of John Richard Green, preacher before he was historian, "that high thinking put into plain English is more likely to tell upon men than all the 'simple Gospel sermons' in the world." But the chief interest of the volume to us lies in its "Prefatory Essay" on the "New Theology." The author declares the purpose of this essay to be "to state, so far as is now possible, some of the main features of that phase of present thought, popularly known as the 'New Theology': to indicate the lines on which it is moving, to express something of its spirit, and to give it so much of definite form that it shall no longer suffer from the charge of vagueness." This is a task of the greatest importance at the present time. And the author of these sermons, although he emphatically disclaims speaking for any one but himself alone, is eminently qualified for the work by his own position in the movement, and by his knowledge of and sympathy with its leading representatives. As to its ultimate form in the conception and statement of the great central doctrines of Christianity, the "New Theology" remains after the light thrown upon it by this essay as vague as it ever was before. This was inevitable because hitherto it exists even in the apprehension of its most illuminated prophets, not as a body of truth, but only as a spirit, a method, and a stream of tendency, the general drift of which they are only beginning to calculate. Nevertheless, the author has made a contribution to our knowledge in this direction of real value. Taken in connection with the, at least, equally able sermon on the same subject delivered by the Rev. Philip S. Moxom, pastor of the First Baptist church, Cleveland, Ohio, at Point Chautauqua this summer, and printed in full in the *Standard* of Chicago, August 23d, this essay affords us sufficient grounds for a deliberate if not final estimate at least of the spirit and method if not of the dogmas of the "New Theology."

*In the first place*, although the usefulness of the "Old Theology," "in its time and place," is admitted, its entire spirit and method is declared to be false. By the "Old Theology" is meant primarily New England Theology, since Edwards, but none the less inclusively, Calvinistic, Lutheran, Arminian, Anglican, and Roman Catholic Theology; in short, the entire method of comprehending the great central truths of Christianity which has prevailed with various modifications in the historic churches since the time of St. Augustine. The "Old Theology" failed in that it took too despairing a view of human nature, as utterly impotent and blind with regard to things of the Spirit of God; because it regarded the Bible as too exclusively divine and as rendered by a plenary and even verbal inspiration the absolutely authoritative and sole source of information in matters of religion, and the sole and sufficient rule of faith; because it consequently built upon a false exegesis, taking texts according to their sound out of their connections; because it has been crystallized into fixed mechanical

forms and correlations by an undue use of human logic—logic unscrupulously applied to deficient premises, and under imperfectly discerned relations.

There is, of course, a great deal of truth in what is said in criticism of the Old Theology as to the faults of many of its most eminent representatives in the matter of the abuse of textual citation, and of logical inference, and of speculative presumption. But in fact these criticisms are wholesale, indiscriminate, and utterly uncandid, since these interpreters of the "New Theology" incontinently proceed from the criticism of the faults of the Old Theology to the more than equal illustration of the same in their own work.

*In the second place*, the "New Theology" is positively marked by the following attributes. The work of the destructive critics, as Colenso, Kuenen, Wellhausen, etc., is recognized with qualified approbation, while their destructive results are not admitted. The Scriptures are admitted to be rather a revelation of God than a peremptory revelation from God of what he requires man to believe and to do—the various books of Scripture are to be interpreted therefore more as separate human compositions, peculiarly illuminated with divine light, in view of their historical genesis and surroundings, than, as by the old theologians, as one homogeneous work, the expression of one mind; so the New Theology relies far more than the Old upon the guidance of man's natural, moral and religious intuitions, limiting and guiding the exegesis of Scripture and the theological applications of logic by ethical tastes and judgments. Hence it bases its judgments far more upon the current experience of men of all classes and conditions in actual life, following rather than resisting the great cosmical drifts of tendency in thought and feeling, and "it claims for itself a larger, broader use of reason than has been accorded to theology" in the past. It is a renaissance rather than a new creation. The new movement allies itself with early Greek theology, as it existed before the dominating influence of Augustine; "the modern authors whom it most consults were Erskine, Campbell, McLeod, Maurice, Stanley, Robertson, the Hare brothers, Bushnell"; it denies the current definitions of all the old doctrines, and the essence of some of them. Yet it uses the old characteristic terms and phrases by which they have been immemorially expressed, thus conciliating prejudice and confusing distinctions; "if its essays, though largely negative and tentative, are met by contradiction and ecclesiastical censure, it does not stay its hand nor heed the clamor."

These brethren of the "New Theology" have two characteristics which must never be forgotten in our most earnest hostile criticism, and which ally them to us as most important confederates in the greater war which in these days should unite all "who call themselves Christians" against the enemies of all religion. They are genuine and earnest opponents of materialism in all its forms; they maintain and emphasize the freedom and responsibility of the human soul in willing; they emphasize the reality of the Incarnation, and worship and love the divine human Person of our Lord. God bless them for all this, and keep us from ever ceasing to love them.

Nevertheless their criticism of the "Old Theology" is pettish and absurdly crude and exaggerated. Calvinism is said to be mechanically constructed of *five points*, which involves an historical as well as critical blunder. The old theologians are said to have neglected scientific exegesis. Who among the new theologians has shown any skill in scientific exegesis? Did not Calvin devote himself to the interpretation of Scripture on the widest scale? And is it not true that his commentaries are recognized as masterpieces of successful interpretation by the most scientific exegetes of to-day? Is not the leading exegesis of to-day in the main consentaneous with the Old Theology? (See Delitzsch, Meyer and Weiss.) Does Mr. Munger himself discover any particular exegetical skill or even interest in these representative sermons? He denies the *possibility*

of the future resurrection of our bodies on *scientific* grounds. He assumes that "science" makes this faith impossible, which is contrary to fact and absurd. He makes his points throughout these sermons by appeals to reason and experience. They are characteristically but slightly tinged with any Biblical quality. Where the Bible is referred to as authority it is cited in purely isolated texts in the very worst manner of the "Old Theology."

These brethren profess to believe in the scientific law of development, yet they reject the whole world-wide historic development of Christian thought since Augustine and go back to the theology of the early Greek fathers. The element of early Greek theology which was clearly wrought out, that, namely, of the Trinity and the Person of Christ, they refuse to accept. The elements of Greek theology of which the New is a renaissance are only the fanciful exegesis, the Neo-Platonic speculation, the confused, logically chaotic, statements of various vague segments of Christian truths by individual writers. We regard their continued use of the old familiar religious language of the church, while the sense in which it is to be understood is changed constantly and indefinitely, as fitted if not designed to mislead, and as therefore immoral. The resurrection of the body from the grave is denied, and yet the phrase "resurrection of the body" retained. The reformation doctrine of forensic justification through the instrumentality of faith is denied, while the phrase "justification by faith" is retained. The objective reference of the atonement is denied or obscured, while the phrases, "vicarious sacrifice," "propitiation," etc., are retained. The doctrines of election, regeneration, conversion, sanctification, etc., are modified, and yet the old language is used unchanged. Against this we protest in the name of truth and honesty.

They charge the "Old Theology" with want of humanity and of missionary spirit. Surely this is ludicrous. It is notorious that it is precisely the "Old Theology" which from the time of Calvin till to-day has inspired all missions, all healthy and successful moral regenerations of individuals or communities, and all successful revivals. Who are the missionaries, who the revivalists of the "New Theology"?

In conclusion, however much these brethren may personally differ in their spirit or desires from the old Socinians, or the modern Rationalists and Unitarians, their working principle is precisely the same with theirs. The mediæval church built upon the doctrine of the infallible Church. The reformation built upon the doctrine of the infallible Word of God written. These other parties one and all build upon history—the Bible—the modern lights of science, etc., as all these are limited and interpreted by the INTUITIONS. These are the judges of the court of last appeal. The following questions represent our judgment and our fears. On what principle of their working philosophy (that philosophy by which these new theologians are being so widely separated from the old) can they limit their progress short of the position of Channing? On what principle could Channing limit his progress short of the position of Theodore Parker? On what principle could Theodore Parker limit his progress short of the position of the blankest Agnostic?

Dr. Ellis, of Boston, said to the writer this summer on the piazza of the Grand Union Hotel, Saratoga: "Sir, I tell you that it is precisely the repetition of the movement transacted in Harvard in the early years of this century." In this judgment enlightened liberalism and conservative orthodoxy see eye to eye.

A. A. HODGE.

HANDBUCH DER THEOLOGISCHEN WISSENSCHAFTEN IN ENCYCLOPADISCHER DARSTELLUNG, mit besonderer Rücksicht auf die Entwicklungsgeschichte der einzelnen Disciplinen; in Verbindung mit Dr. CHR. ERNST LUTHARDT,