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## THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

(A Postmillennarian View.)

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The last things in theology are really the first things in life. The woes of the European war are sending the world's mind back to eschatology. We were settling down into a naturalistic optimism. We were dreaming about some Utopia to be brought in by social programmes. The world to come was being relegated in favor of the world that now is.

Providence is driving us back to the old question, "After death, what?" What is to be the final *denouement* of this interesting world?

The Second Coming of Christ is, for Christian eschatology, the most momentous event which struggles in the bosom of the future. From the fall of man till the star stood still over Bethlehem, the First Coming of Christ was the sublimest object which loomed upon the horizon of human hope. Now all Christendom strains its eye for the return of him who once came, and has promised to come again.

About the fact and importance of the Second Coming, the Christian world is agreed. We all believe that Jesus will return

"Jesus himself, in handling the Old Testament, said that Moses in his law of divorce had compromised the divine intention. And we, using our Lord's liberty, must confess that St. Paul was not consistent with his own Christian principles in treating marriage. . . . We have to recognize that he never seems to have grasped the true union of man and wife as comrades in faith and purpose. Instead of abiding by his own statement that men and women are equal in Christ, he is bound by his traditional Pharisaic theology that man is superior to woman, because man was made directly in God's image, while woman was only copied from man." (Supp. 134, 135.)

By such depreciation of the word of God and of the character of the ten commandments as is found in this book, the author has perhaps done more to rob them of power over his readers than all his explanations and commendations will do to further that power over men.

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**DIVINE INSPIRATION.** *By George Preston Morris, Author of "Christianity and the New Age," "Modern Thought and Traditional Faith," etc. Price \$1.00 net. George H. Doran Company, New York.*

Dr. Morris is the senior publishing agent of the Methodist book concern and is represented in a slip accompanying the book from the publishers as one of the leading scholars of the Methodist Episcopal Church. It is further claimed in this slip that the book "takes note of the significant finding of comparative religion and traces the course of the influence of the divine Spirit through the centuries, finding in the Holy Scriptures the crown of Revelation."

We have been the more careful to set forth these claims because to us the book seems a singularly trashy production. The author identifies illumination and inspiration, and finds illumination in all religions and in all realms of investigation—scientific and philosophic as well as the distinctly religious. If he discovers in the Bible "the crown of Revelation," he also declares it to be a crown with many spots on it. He declares that "Certain scientific studies demonstrate that in its literary, historic and scientific features the Bible is neither inerrant nor infallible"; that the production of an infallible book is an impossibility; that "the theory of an infallible book makes no adequate provision for intellectual and moral growth of the race"; that the spirit of inspiration is still a living and operative presence in the world; that "it is the task of the Christian seer and teacher of today to co-ordinate all truth, whether scientific or philosophical, into vital relations to Christian thought; and that the Spirit-inspired teacher and leader, tantamount to inspired prophet and apostle, will always be needed as interpreters and guides of the kingdom."

Inspiration is a Bible doctrine. The author gets his doctrine not from the Bible, but from the drifts in the theological world. The author himself is adrift. Perhaps he would claim to be a seer, "tantamount to inspired pro-

phet and apostle." But he differs widely from prophet and apostle in his view of perusing Scriptures. They thought that what the Scriptures said God said. He can't think so. If he be indeed a trustworthy seer, he should glean for us from the Bible that which is still trustworthy.

The book has grains of good and shovelfuls of trash in it. Judge from the quotations made above.

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THE KINGDOM AND THE MESSIAH. *By E. F. Scott, D. D., Professor of New Testament Literature in Queen's University, Kingston, Canada. T. and T. Clark Publishers. Pp. 257. Price \$2.25.*

What is meant by "the Kingdom of God"? The expression is used more than one hundred times in the Gospels alone. Is the Kingdom of God heaven? Is it the church? Is it a new social order? Is it all of these combined? Did Jesus expect a gradual coming of the kingdom by a process of natural development, or did he conceive of it as breaking in suddenly by the immediate act of God? Did Jesus think of the kingdom as something purely future, or as already, in some measure, beginning? What is the relation of Jesus to the kingdom? Was Jesus conscious of his Messiahship from the very beginning of his life in the flesh, or did it gradually dawn upon him?

These are some of the questions with which this book bristles, and with which the author grapples with evident scholarship. The author is a radical in criticism and in theology. We cannot agree with him for a moment in the way in which he handles the Scriptures and some topics of theology, but he is always reverent and thoughtful. While we cannot agree with many of his processes, we must confess that he has made a distinct contribution to the questions in hand, and that he is rich in suggestion for thoughtful and discriminating readers.

The kingdom idea is traced through the Old Testament and the Apocryphal writings. This makes a very interesting study. It is very evident that the idea of the kingdom was a perfectly familiar one with the Jews before Jesus was born into the world. He inherited the idea, but took it and revised and enlarged it and put a richer meaning into it.

Next we have chapters on John the Baptist and the Kingdom, the Preparation for the Kingdom, The Kingdom in the Teachings of Jesus, and The Relation of Jesus to the Kingdom. All of these chapters are highly suggestive. The latter part of the book is taken up with the Messiah and his relation to the kingdom. Here the author becomes more radical from our point of view, and yet what he says is thought provoking and compels us to look about for the reasons for the views which we hold on this subject.

But let us hear the author's conclusion of the whole matter: "The teaching of Jesus was based throughout on his conception of the kingdom; and this conception did not originate with himself, but had gradually developed through centuries of Jewish thought. . . . Jesus accepted the idea of