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I. Literary.

THE UNITY OF SECOND CORINTHIANS.

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It is admitted by nearly all critics that the Second Epistle to the Corinthians is wholly the work of Paul. A few Dutch scholars have recently been bold enough to maintain that none of the letters attributed to the apostle were really written by him, at least in their present form (Cf. Pierson and Naber, "Verisimilia," 1886; R. Steck, Galater brief, 1888; Von Manen; Expository Times, February and March, 1898); but in view of the small adhesion given to this school by even rationalistic writers, it may be set aside as one of the eccentricities of criticism. The epistle bears every evidence of Pauline authorship. It is, in fact, the most autobiographic of the apostle's writings. It is written in his most intense and characteristic style. It deals with a particular situation occasioned by his relation to the Corinthian church. It contains those doctrinal ideas which were his favorite thoughts. Yet it is no set thesis. It is the outpouring of his heart to his fickle but beloved Corinthians. There can be, therefore, no question that from beginning to end of the epistle we have the genuine product of the apostle's pen.

But, while this is generally admitted, not a few contend that our extant epistle consists of several fragments; all of them by Paul, but not all written at the same time. One epistle is said to be a compilation of Pauline documents which it is possible for criticism to distinguish and possibly to assign to their real occasions. This view is not a new one. In the eighteenth cen-

book. Through the inestimable labors of Dr. William Henry Foote the facts connected with the Augusta Church for a century or more have been uniquely preserved. From the time that his pen rested to the present we naturally expected a fuller history of the old church.

But we are specially interested in Mr. VanDevanter's book, because we think it is a good step in the right direction. The history of our people and our churches ought to be preserved. Prof. John B. Minor remarked to us some years ago, "Are you familiar with Foote's *Sketches of Virginia?*" Upon our answering in the negative, he replied, "You should familiarize yourself with it, for it is a wonderfully fascinating as well as instructive work." These *Sketches* are simply invaluable. To them we are indebted mainly for the interesting facts of the thrilling story of our fathers from the days of Francis Makemie down to the middle of the closing century. The Virginia historian of to-day would run short of material without Foote's *Sketches*, and many of the heroic deeds of our ancestors would be lost in obscurity.

There is great need that some one take up this work where Foote left off. Somewhere, we doubt not, there exists the right man for this task. But while we are waiting for a second Dr. Foote we are prepared to welcome with delight such valuable books as Waddell's *Annals of Augusta County* and VanDevanter's *History of the Augusta Church*.

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JANICE MEREDITH. *A Story of the American Revolution.* By Paul Leicester Ford, Author of "The Honorable Peter Stirling," "The Story of an Untold Love," "The Many-Sided Franklin," "The True George Washington," etc. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company. MCM.

This novel has received high praise and strong censure, faint praise and feeble censure, according to the character of the critics. To us the book has a charm of style, a fascination that springs of mystery, an attraction growing out of a true love-story, particularly as one approaches the close, and a general justice of historic coloring which gives the stimulus of information; and yet parts of it leave us with a bad taste in the mouth. The great George Washington is well painted here—the masterful man amongst his fellows, holding his sturdy way amidst machinations, defeat and apparent disaster, and rising superior to them all. As for the heroine, she strikes us as very like some women in the flesh. We acknowledge her naturalness and charm from the first moment of our introduction. She is bright and attractive. We confess that we would admire her more if she were less easy to kiss. This weakness robs her of the most delicate fragrance. True, she was a very young girl when first introduced. True, also, she improves with years. But we can't forget that she fell in love too easily at first, and did not have persistence of character enough for a long while to stand against her rather contemptible old father's selfish moves as to her future.

But on one ground we decidedly dislike this book. This is our reason

for noticing it. Its slam at the Westminster Confession of Faith is both weak and unworthy. On page 57 there is a reference to the teaching of the Confession and of Jonathan Edwards which is a voice of the time-ghost. Mr. Ford seems to teach that Mr. Edwards, whom he represents as a Presbyterian, taught *infant damnation*. Though Mr. Ford does not so affirm, the superficial reader will understand that such was the current belief of those who adhered to the Westminster standards in that age. This does not seem to be historically true. Since the Rev. Michael Wigglesworth, of Malden, Mass., who died in 1705, we know of no Calvinistic theologian who has avowed his belief in infant damnation. Edwards taught the native sinfulness of children; that their death was of the nature of penalty, and combatted the idea of only partial imputation of sin. We have yet to discover that he taught that any infants dying in infancy actually are damned. The Westminster Confession, in the celebrated chapter x. 3, "Elect infants dying in infancy are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who worketh when and where and how he pleaseth," explains how elect infants dying in infancy are saved. It does not attempt to settle whether all infants are elect or not. As Dr. A. A. Hodge says, "The Confession affirms what is certainly revealed, and allows that which revelation has not decided to remain without the suggestion of a positive opinion upon one side or the other."

No one of the other churches of Christendom has any real ground of boasting over the Presbyterian Church in this matter.

Ulrich Zwingle was the first to teach that all *elect children* are saved whether baptized or not. He taught this repeatedly, whether the children were of heathen parents or Christian parents. He taught that they were saved through the atonement of Christ. He leaned to the view that all children dying in infancy were among the elect. He held that God thus revealed his special love for them. This was a great innovation in the teaching of the church out of which Zwingle came. The Roman Catholic Church held and holds to-day that all *baptized* children are saved, and that no *unbaptized* child is saved. It sends all unbaptized children to the *limbus infantum*, a cool, negative sort of hell. The Roman Church was early driven to this by its false sacramentalism. The Lutheran creed is substantially the same with the Roman Catholic on this matter. Lutheran theologians take a much higher view, however. The Reformed creeds teach the salvation of all elect infants dying in infancy, whether baptized or not. "The second Scotch Confession, of 1580, expressly rejects, among other errors of popery, 'the cruel judgment against infants departing without the sacrament'" (see Schaff's *Creeds of Christendom*, Vol. I., p. 380). Of the other Calvinistic theologians, some supposed that some infants go to hell; but others left all infants dying as such to the mercy of God.

In the seventeenth century the Arminians, with their false view of sin, taught the general salvation of infants. In the eighteenth century the Methodists and Baptists taught also the general salvation of infants dying in infancy. But probably since the time of Ulrich Zwingle

there have always been in the Reformed or Presbyterian Church as large a number who held to the salvation of all infants dying in infancy. And they have held it and the biblical doctrine of the salvation of all elect infants in a way to magnify the grace of God as no other denominations have done.

Presbyterians often suffer from the misrepresentations of their creed and the views of their great leaders on this subject. Let them ask their slanderers in *whose* ecclesiastical loins they themselves were when the Westminster standards were being made or John Calvin was perfecting the Institutes. They will discover, perhaps, that their spiritual forefathers, contemporary to Calvin, were mere swine heads in power to know and teach God's truth as compared to Calvin.

Mr. Ford can not afford to be so unjust. His book does harm to the multitudes whom he misleads.

7th May, 1900.

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