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JESUS' ALLEGED CONFESSION OF SIN

The pericope of "the rich young ruler" is found in all three of the Synoptic Gospels, and it is associated in all of them with narratives of a common type. In all three it immediately follows the account of Jesus' receiving and blessing little children; and it is clear from Mark's representation (as also indeed from Matthew's¹) that the incident actually occurred in immediate sequence to that scene. In Luke, these two narratives are immediately preceded by the parable of the Pharisee and Publican praying in the Temple; in Matthew they are immediately succeeded by the parable of the workmen in the vineyard who were surprised that their rewards were not nicely adjusted to what they deemed their relative services. It cannot be by accident that these four narratives, all of which teach a similar lesson, are brought thus into contiguity. It is the burden of them all that the Kingdom of God is a gratuity, not an acquisition; and the effect of bringing them together is to throw a great emphasis upon this, their common teaching.

Perhaps this teaching finds nowhere more pungent intimation than in the declaration of our Lord which forms the core of the account of His reception of the children: "For of such is the kingdom of heaven," (or "of God": Mt. xix. 14; Mk. x. 14; Lk. xviii. 16). These "little children" were, as we learn from Luke, mere babies (Lk. xiii. 15: τὰ βρέφη), which Jesus held in His arms (Mk. x. 16: ἐναγκα-

¹ Accordingly, Th. Zahn, *Das Evangelium des Matthaeus ausgelegt*, 1903, p. 589 says correctly (on Mt. xix. 16): "The close chronological connection is assured by the καὶ ἰδοὺ, verse 16, after ἐπορεύθη ἐκείθεν, verse 15."

a great loss, but certainly not destructive of faith itself" (p. 176): After this clear declaration that Jesus may indeed be useful but cannot be necessary to faith ("Christian faith," mind you!) Heitmüller has little more to add except this positive declaration with which his lecture closes: "Jesus' significance is a purely one sided and limited one, and on that very account a very great and abiding one: it rests on the absolute forcibleness of His consciousness of God, which precisely for this reason makes Him the revelation of God for others, and in the apprehension of God as holiness and love. Thus He is a source of power; from which there ever proceed new waves and surges of that faith in God, the exposition and further development of which remains the task left to the exigencies and gifts of the different generations—to the Spirit who takes of the things of Jesus (Jno. xvi. 12 ff.). Our generation too has had its particular task. But we too, like all generations, may with Philip turn to Jesus with the confident request: 'Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us'" (pp. 177-8).

We have transcribed the argument of this lecture with perhaps unnecessary fulness, because it seems to be put forward by Heitmüller as his defence against the charge that what he teaches is "Christianity" only in name, and has nothing but the name in common with anything that has hitherto been known by that name. Clearly it offers no sufficing defence against that charge. Under the name of "Christianity" indeed, it is clear that Heitmüller teaches a religion which stands in so external a relation to Christ, that it can get along very well without Him, and appeals to Him only to enable it to do a little more easily perhaps, perhaps a little more thoroughly, what it would be quite able to do even though He never existed. Jesus is an encouragement, an incitement, an inspiration to religious endeavour: nothing more. Obviously this has nothing but the name in common with the Christianity which sees in Jesus Christ not merely a revelation of God as Father, but the reconciliation of God to sinful man. Here as von Schenck truly says are not two varieties of "Christianity," but two different religions and the only question is, which of these two religions is Christianity. We know which is the Christianity of Jesus, of Paul, of all the New Testament writers, who all alike present Christ as offering in His blood a ransom for the sins of the world. This is not the "Christianity" of Heitmüller. We cannot profess to be of both parties here. They stand in crass contrariety to one another and we must choose between them; and choosing between them, we must frankly declare of which of these two religions we are.

Princeton.

BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD.

HISTORICAL THEOLOGY

Alexandre Vinet. Histoire de sa vie et de ses ouvrages. Par E. RAMBERT. Quatrième édition, illustrée et augmenté d'une préface et de notes par Ph. BRIDEL. Lausanne: Georges Bridel & C^{ie} Éditeurs. 1912. 8vo; pp. xvi, 640.

The first and second editions of this standard biography of Vinet by Rambert appeared in 1875, the third, containing only a few minor changes, in 1876. Since that time a considerable number of volumes and magazine articles concerning Vinet's life and the wide and varied influence of his works have been published, among the most notable being Pressensé's *Vinet d'après sa correspondance inédite avec Luttheroth* (Paris, 1891), containing many valuable letters to which Rambert had not had access.

The present edition leaves the last revision by the original author unaltered, but offers in the form of additional footnotes and several appendices a wealth of valuable biographical details concerning the leading contemporaries of Vinet referred to in the body of the work, together with a number of important corrections to be made in the former texts.

In its new form this biography may justly be regarded as an adequate treatment of its distinguished subject. The copious use of Vinet's own diary gives us a vivid picture not only of his domestic life, so blessed yet so full of trials, but also of his intellectual struggles, his professional labors, his literary plans and achievements, and his engagingly sincere and humble piety. His letters, too, are skillfully introduced to disclose his slow but steady development into the mighty "initiateur religieux" that he became. His services as a teacher, critic and historian of the French language and literature are fully set forth, as is likewise his influence in securing the separation of church and state in his native land. Critical estimates are furnished of the most important of his varied writings—his lyric, patriotic and religious verses, his works in literary criticism, his philosophical, dogmatic and ethical dissertations, his articles on the nature and constitution of the church—but not of his numerous posthumous publications. Owing much, in the formative period of his religious development, to Thomas Erskine of Scotland, and in his later philosophical attainments to Kant, he felt himself most powerfully drawn to the Frenchman Pascal: and like Pascal he has exerted his characteristic and most potent influence not by means of a well wrought out system of ideas but rather through the suggestive treatment of a number of seed-thoughts which were bound to bear fruit in the soil in which he planted them.

Princeton.

FREDERICK W. LOETSCHER.

Zwingli und Calvin. VON AUGUST LANG. Mit 161 Abbildungen, darunter zwei mehrfarbigen Einschaltbildern. 1913. Bielefeld und Leipzig: Verlag von Velhagen & Klasing. 8vo; pp. 152. 4 M.

This is the thirty-first volume in Heych's *Monographien zur Weltgeschichte*. In its external features this book, like the rest in the series, presents, in spite of its low cost, a high standard of artistic excellence. The beautiful illustrations, reproducing practically all the available contemporary pictures directly pertaining to the two reformers and their most intimate friends and fellow-laborers, add immensely to the reader's interest in the biographical sketches.