

THE PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL REVIEW.

No. 2—April, 1905.

I.

THE INCARNATION AND OTHER WORLDS.

IT has been objected to the Biblical doctrine of the Incarnation, that it is suggestive of conceit on the part of us men. Large as the earth seems to us, it is small when compared with even our own sun. But there are stars, themselves suns, in comparison with which our sun itself is small; so that astronomy shows how insignificant this little earth of ours is amid the multitudinous items that make up the universe. Whether or no the starry worlds or the planets of our own system are now or ever have been or ever will be inhabited, has long been an open question. The latest word on the subject has been uttered by Mr. Alfred Russell Wallace, who, in his recent discussion of *Man's Place in the Universe*, has urged with great zeal the thesis that our earth is the only one of the millions of globes throughout the universe that has or can become the seat of intelligent life. Both his reasonings and his conclusions have been combated by competent critics, so that the question remains an open one as far as the scientists are concerned.

But granting for the moment Mr. Wallace's contention, our humanity would then be but as a speck of intelligence in the universe; and the objector to the Incarnation asks, "Why should the Son of God ally Himself—and so irrevocably—with such an insignificant part of his wide creation?" The very question, in the judgment of the objector, shows how absurd is the conceit. Possibly it is enough to say, in reply to the objection as thus stated, that, with astronomy in mind, the Bible itself comes to the exactly opposite conclusion. The objection is predicated upon the insig-

lating exegesis, flattening our homiletics into a sociological whirligig, abolishing our historic studies and substituting for them a roundelay of contemporaneous Church-gossip, in which each Church shall complacently regard itself and softly stroke down the other, trying to forget *what* she is and *why* and *what for?* God forbid! Especially as regards Church life, there is in America an appalling lack of the historic spirit, a lack which is noted by all foreign observers, as is witnessed by the foreign reports of our great ecclesiastical meetings."

Prof. Dosker speaks with the wisdom of experience when he treats of the method of teaching Church History in our seminaries. He rightly contends that the work of the regular student must be "genetic and general, rather than specific and exhaustive." The special studies must be undertaken in post-graduate courses. In speaking of the usefulness of this discipline the writer magnifies its apologetic value—perhaps too much so to accord either with the truly scientific spirit that ought to animate the work, or with the value that inheres in the discipline as an end in itself—while other advantages are not stated with sufficient fullness and emphasis. But we forbear making any detailed criticism of the *Address*, for its extreme brevity—it occupies only fifteen pages—has allowed Prof. Dosker to present only the more salient features of his practical theme, and that only by way of suggestive and not detailed treatment.

The pamphlet contains also the "Inaugural Prayer" by Dr. P. H. Hoge, of Louisville, Ky., and the "Charge to the Professor" by Dr. J. G. Hunter, of Harrodsburg, Ky.

Princeton.

FREDERICK W. LOETSCHER.

A HISTORY OF AMERICAN REVIVALS. By FRANK GRENVILLE BEARDSLEY, S.T.D. American Tract Society, 1904. 8vo, pp. 324.

In sixteen chapters of very unequal length and interest Dr. Beardsley has furnished "within modest limits a simple and straightforward account of the great revivals and revival movements characteristic of our national religious history." Without aiming at an exhaustive or critical treatment of this large subject, but with a deeply religious interest as his motive power, and an ample historical knowledge from which to draw, our author has produced a highly instructive and readable volume. Every Princetonian will be especially gratified by the generous recognition which the writer has accorded to the religious influences that have emanated from Nassau Hall and the Theological Seminary from the very birth of these institutions, the former of which may be regarded as a direct offspring of the "Great Awakening" of 1740 and the latter as at least a foster-daughter of the Revival of 1800.

The style, unfortunately, is often marred by an unpardonable looseness, as, for example, in such a sentence as the following (p. 49): "Abhorrent as such doctrines are to this age, when presented by a mind of such logical force and acumen as that of Mr. Edwards, they were calculated to be tremendously effective." Not seldom, too, the flow of the narrative dwindles into the shallow feebleness of mere annals. The first chapter on "The Genesis of Revivals" bears a misleading caption, and is so remotely connected with the main theme that we are inclined to say it would have pleased us more had the author at once plunged *in medias res*, and not tried, in these introductory seven pages, to "consider briefly and somewhat cursorily the great revivals which have characterized the growth and development of religion" from the days of Enosh, through Jewish, Apostolic, Mediæval and Reformation history up to Puritanism.

But the chapters on the most important topics, such as the "Great Awakening" of 1734 to 1740, and the Revivals of 1800 and 1857, and the more modern "Lay Movement in Revivals," are full of varied interest. The great personalities—Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, Charles G. Finney and Dwight L. Moody—

stand out in strong relief against a noble army of less celebrated Christian warriors. The specific peculiarities of the most important revivals, such as the antecedent events leading up to the awakening, the diversity of means employed, and the final results attained are set forth with admirable discrimination. Thus in connection with the "Great Awakening of 1800" the fact is emphasized that at least in New England there were "no evangelists or protracted meetings, nor were extraordinary methods of any character resorted to. . . . There were no anxious seats, nor was there any attempt to influence the unconverted to commit themselves in public as seekers after religion." The extravagances connected with many of these seasons of religious excitement are frankly admitted, but in no case is suspicion cast upon the genuineness or real worth of the historic revivals. The denominational issue, as might be expected in a fair-minded work on such a subject, is a matter of altogether subordinate importance, but, of course, truth to history must accord the most generous treatment to the Congregationalists, the Presbyterians and the Methodists. An Index, combining topical with personal items, facilitates reference to the many officers in this long series of religious campaigns, as well as to the numerous strategic points of assault and the varied tactics employed in the different regions. We heartily concur in the conclusion to which the author's inductive study of the facts has led him: "These three elements, Prayer, the Outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the Presentation of Gospel Truth, constitute the invariable characteristics of all true revivals from Pentecost to the present time. It is safe to presume, therefore, that there never will be revivals of any great value to the Church of Christ without relying upon these conditions which seem indispensable." We gladly recommend the book, in spite of its literary deficiencies, as an admirable reference volume on the subject of "American Revivals."

Princeton.

FREDERICK W. LOETSCHER.

DR. MARTIN LUTHERS BRIEFE NEBST DEN WICHTIGSTEN BRIEFEN, DIE AN IHN GERICHTET SIND, UND EINIGEN ANDEREN EINSCHLAGENDEN INTERESSANTEN SCHRIFTSTÜCKEN. Briefe vom Jahre 1533 bis 1546. Nachlese. Nachtrag zu den Briefen vom April, 1531, bis zum Juli, 1536. Auf Neue herausgegeben im Auftrag des Ministeriums der deutschen ev.-luth. Synode vom Missouri, Ohio und anderen Staaten. St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1904. 4to, pp. xxiii, columns 1794 to 3519. (Volume XXIb of Luther's Sämmtliche Schriften.)

The first half of this volume was briefly noticed in this REVIEW in the January issue of 1904. It is needless to state that the same high scholarship that has characterized all the preceding tomes is here also everywhere in evidence: in the careful chronological and topical indexes, in the painstaking translations of the letters into modern German, in the elaborate critical apparatus, as well as in the many improvements that have been made in the text itself.

By far the larger portion of the volume is devoted to Luther's letters from the year 1538 to his death in 1546, together with about two hundred letters addressed to him, including one from Calvin, twenty from Philip of Hesse, twenty-five from Melancthon, and eighty-one from Elector John Frederick of Saxony. The "gleanings" that follow these letters are taken from the original Halle edition of Johann Georg Walch. Thirty-seven documents are here reprinted, many of prime historical importance, such as Spalatin's account of Luther's interview with Cardinal Cajetan and of the transactions at the Diet of Augsburg in 1530, Justus Jonas' letter to the Elector announcing Luther's death, Bugenhagen's funeral sermon, and Cruciger's translation of Melancthon's eulogy at the burial of Luther. The "Supplement" contains epistolary additions and emendations based upon the ninth and tenth volumes of the *Erlanger Briefwechsel*, the late appearance of