

# THE PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL REVIEW

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## THE REFORMATION AND NATURAL LAW.\*

The world of to-day is filled with the conflict about the modern understanding of the Gospel. The decision in this conflict cannot be reached merely through Biblical studies and the investigation of primitive Christianity; there is need also of a thorough acquaintance with the development of the evangelical Church and of the evangelical spirit, as well as with their influence upon the formation of the modern world. In this respect, however, evangelical theology must be pronounced positively backward. The Protestant scholar, who is at home in Babylonia and Assyria, in primitive Christianity, and in the first three centuries, is in Germany no less than in England and America often without a moderately adequate survey of the general development of his own Church. How fragmentary is the exposition in the general Church histories, how narrow and one-sided in the histories of doctrine. How many fields have still received very little cultivation, for example, non-German Protestantism, the great movement of the "Enlightenment" and of Rationalism, Christian life, Protestantism and culture, and the like. In view of this defect, Ernst Tröltsch deserves gratitude on account of the very fact that he has even undertaken such a work as the comparatively full presentation of "Protestant Christianity and the Modern Church", which he

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\* Translated by J. Gresham Machen, B.D. The article will appear in German in the *Beiträge zur Förderung christlicher Theologie*, edited by Schlatter and Lütgert.

What Gilbert means by a "disenthralled Bible" (p. 292) is essentially a Bible from which we have been disenthralled.

*Princeton.*

J. GRESHAM MACHEN.

ΠΡΟΣ ΡΩΜΑΙΟΥΣ. DIE EPISTEL PAULI AN DIE RÖMER, verdeutscht und erläutert von G. RICHTER, Pfarrer in Gollantsch. Gütersloh. Druck und Verlag von C. Bertelsmann. 1907. Pp. 90.

The aim of this little book seems to be somewhat similar to that of the commentaries of Rudolf Niemann on the same epistle (see *PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL REVIEW*, Vol. VI, p. 144). The author seeks to awaken interest in the Epistle to the Romans outside the circle of the trained theologians or even of advanced students in any department. The commentary is arranged throughout in two columns, of which the former is devoted to details of exegesis, the second to an exposition of the general progress of the thought. An acquaintance with the Greek text is presupposed. The effort to attain brevity and simplicity has perhaps been carried almost to an extreme, but the book will no doubt prove useful in the place that it is intended to fill.

*Princeton.*

J. GRESHAM MACHEN.

The Baird Lecture for 1907. THE FOUR GOSPELS IN THE EARLIEST CHURCH HISTORY. By THOMAS NICOL, D.D., Professor of Divinity and Biblical Criticism in the University of Aberdeen. William Blackwood & Sons: Edinburgh and London. 1908. Pp. xxii, 326.

Dr. Nicol believes that the "first line of defense" of the credibility of Gospel history "must always be the external evidence". It is important that this evidence should be set forth from time to time in popular form, and in the light of recent discussion; and it is fortunate that the work has been done this time by a careful and thoroughly competent scholar. Those who have studied the masters, "Westcott and Lightfoot, Sanday and Stanton", will be upon familiar ground, but will read with enjoyment and profit this fresh presentation of the evidence. Dr. Nicol adopts the method of Salmon and Zahn and begins with the literature at the close of the second century, and works back toward the Apostolic age. This he does first for the fourfold collection and then for each Gospel separately. He makes the point (alluding to Harnack's work on Luke) that where the internal evidence, as examined by modern scholarship, is conclusive, it confirms the traditional authorship. He believes it to be a reasonable conclusion that the Four Gospels "were written by the Evangelists whose names they bear." A bibliography of some one hundred titles and an index add to the usefulness of the volume.

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