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ENGLISH HYMNODY: ITS LATER DEVELOPMENTS.*

I.

THE LITERARY MOVEMENT.

The publication in 1827 of Reginald Heber's *Hymns, written and adapted to the Weekly Church Service of the Year*¹, marked the beginning of a new period in the history of the English Hymn. This book offered a new standard of Hymnody; that of a carefully restrained devotion, accommodated to the Church Year, and expressed in forms of poetic grace and ornament. It introduced a new type, the Literary Hymn.

Heber's correspondence shows him in 1809 purposing to introduce hymn singing at Hodnet as a novelty calculated to increase the attendance at the parish church, and inquiring as to the purchase of a supply of *Olney Hymns*, for some of which he expresses great admiration². He speaks of them as Cowper's, and it seems improbable that his admiration covered many of Newton's.

* Being the Sixth of the Lectures upon "The Hymnody of the English-speaking Churches", delivered on the L. P. Stone Foundation at Princeton Theological Seminary, in February, 1910.

¹ London: John Murray, 8 vo.

² *Life of Reginald Heber*, by his Widow; ed. New York, 1830, vol. i, p. 334.

"we sections" are homogeneous with the rest of the book, his main purpose is to estimate the historical value of the Acts, and his monograph is, in the main, a strong plea for the reliability of Luke as a historian. "Direct touch with the recorded facts—this alone explains such a history as lies before us in the 'Acts of the Apostles'" (p. xv). Testimony is repeatedly given to the care and consistency of Luke's record, but qualification is made in regard to the supernatural element which it contains. Harnack's view of miracles here finds expression: he believes that in the story of the Ascension, Luke has given us "a tertiary legend, indeed a myth" (p. 159), and that he has confused two accounts of the same event, and so has placed the story of Pentecost, chapter ii, before the "actual, historical Pentecost", which followed the cure of the impotent man, chapter iv. Luke indeed shows sobriety and restraint in his treatment of the miraculous, but he writes as a "Christian Scientist", who believes that he himself works miracles. It will be seen that Harnack, as between opposing schools, occupies a position of entire independence, but for this reason his testimony to Luke's accuracy, in cases where his statements can be historically controlled, is the more significant.

No reader of Harnack's book can fail to be enriched by it in his knowledge and understanding of the Acts. The theme of Acts is given as "the power of the Spirit of Jesus in the Apostles manifested in history", calling into being the Primitive Community and the mission to the Gentiles, conducting the Gospel from Jerusalem to Rome, and setting the receptive Gentile world in place of the unbelieving Jewish nation. Unstinted praise is given to Luke's literary skill. The history in his hands becomes a drama, with the Jews as "villain" of the plot; the theme is introduced in chapter ii with "a grand flourish of trumpets", and the list of nations sounds "like a triumphant conqueror's list of nations conquered in a great campaign"; while the long account of the voyage and shipwreck, which has puzzled the commentators, tends "to intensify the suspense of the reader as he wonders whether after all the Gospel will be proclaimed in the metropolis of the world". Harnack gives his support to the North Galation theory of Paul's itinerary; he argues, reversing his former opinion, that the Apostolic Decree is concerned only with moral precepts, idolatry, murder and fornication; and he shows in an excursus that a strong argument can be made for an earlier dating of Acts than he had formerly advocated. Left upon the reader's hands is the problem how Luke could show himself at so many points a careful and reliable historian, and yet should be so credulous and confused when the supernatural element is introduced. But this brings up a question which is too large for adequate treatment here.

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COMMENTAR UBER DEN BRIEF PAULI AN DI RÖMER. VON DR. G. STÖCKHARDT, PROFESSOR AM CONCORDIA-SEMINAR ZU ST. LOUIS. ST. LOUIS, MO. Concordia Publishing House. 1907. Pp. V, 649.

The preface to this commentary on the Epistle to the Romans begins with a protest against the purely historical interest with which many modern exegetes have approached the Biblical books. In opposition to this modern tendency, Dr. Stöckhardt declares his chief purpose to be that of bringing home the "eternal, divine thoughts" of the Epistle to modern readers. The protest is a just and timely one; the grammatico-historical method of exegesis is sometimes falsely regarded as involving aloofness of the interpreter from his subject-matter or an emphasis upon the mere environment of the book to be interpreted at the expense of its inner teaching.

In many respects, Dr. Stöckhardt's book is well suited to its purpose. The interpretation is admirably clear, and avoids the pitfalls of misplaced ingenuity. Furthermore, it is none the less instructive because it is suffused with a deep reverence for the divine revelation. Two criticisms, however, must certainly be made. In the first place, although Dr. Stöckhardt is well read in the older commentaries, he has neglected some of the recent discussions. For example, he himself confesses that the commentary of Sanday and Headlam came to his notice too late to be used, and that the work of Lipsius in the *Handcommentar* was inaccessible to him. In the second place, Dr. Stöckhardt's rebellion against the modern purely historical interest in exegesis has carried him too far in the opposite direction. In so extensive a work, the reader may justly be disappointed, for example, at finding that the curious omissions of ἐν Πώμῃ (Rom. i. 7) from certain early witnesses to the text (see Zahn, *Einleitung* I, pp. 277ff., with the literature cited) has not been mentioned, and that the difficult problem of the sixteenth chapter has been dismissed with a few words.

Dr. Stöckhardt's book, therefore, cannot be regarded as comprehensive. It does not provide information with regard to all sides of the great subject with which it deals. It is defective in some of the *minutiae* of textual and historical criticism, and perhaps contributes little on the purely linguistic side. But Dr. Stöckhardt's clear and sympathetic presentation of the great ideas of the Epistle is of value.

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THE ETHIC OF JESUS, ACCORDING TO THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS. By the REV. JAMES STALKER, M.A., D.D. 8 vo; pp. x, 413. New York. A. C. Armstrong and Son, 3 and 5 West Eighteenth Street. 1909.

"This book has been intentionally so written as to be capable of being read as a whole by itself; yet it is connected with *The Christology of Jesus*, already published, and *The Mind of Jesus as Reported by St. John*, still to be published; and the author has to refer the curious reader to the first of these for the explanation of two things—the view taken of the criticism of the Gospels and the reason for deriving the materials of this volume, as of the preceding one, from the synoptists only".

"The peculiarity of this attempt to set forth the ethic of our Lord"—and its chief excellence—is "that it always draws directly on the words