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## THE INFLUENCE OF DANIEL

A large part of the difficulty which confronts us when we consider the origin of a writer's ideas meets us also when we try to trace the influence of these ideas upon succeeding literary productions. The seeming traces may have come from some other source than the one supposed, or they may be original in the mind of the later writer without any real, or at least conscious, knowledge of the work of the preceding author. If the two works be from approximately the same period of time, or if the circumstances of the two periods of time were substantially the same, the same or similar *Zeitgeist*, or spirit of the times, would naturally produce the same or similar thoughts and expressions of thought. For example, the ennui, the *Weltschmerz*, the disgust with the world and its gifts, and the despairing flight of the soul to its refuge in God, which are manifest in the book of Ecclesiastes, may have been equally characteristic of any period of outward natural prosperity, coincident with moral and spiritual decay. The moralists of the old Egyptians of the Fifth Dynasty, such as Ptahhotep and Imhotep, as well as the Roman satirists, such as Juvenal and Seneca, bear witness to the fact that the soul of man can not be satisfied with mere earthly grandeur and material success. The Aramaic fragments of Achikar as well as the Jewish proverbs of Solomon, Hezekiah, Ben Sira, and Wisdom, exhibit in like manner the vanity of earthly greatness and the transitoriness of human friendship, wealth and happiness. How much, if anything, the Greek philosophers may have derived from the Egyptians, Babylonians, Hindoos, and Hebrews, we may never

of flexibility, incapacity to adapt one's self to environing and alien ideas, fixity of mind and condescension of manner,—these have been throughout all Christian history the intellectual obstacles to missionary success" (p. 270). And so our author proceeds to advocate "translating the Gospel not merely into the words but into the traditions of the antipodes," etc. It may seem a little strange that a representative of a body so conspicuously lacking in missionary achievements as is the Unitarian Church should with such confidence lay down the law as to the conditions of missionary success. And as a matter of fact the conditions of success are almost the exact opposite of those that Dr. Peabody enumerates. The primary condition, at any rate, is that the missionary should have a message which is true—true for the antipodes as well as for America, true for all people and for all ages. Pragmatism is the death of missions; the true missionary is the man who is concerned above all about the objective truth of his message. And such a missionary was the apostle Paul.

Dr. Peabody has little understanding for types of religious life which are different from his own. The Reformation, in its deepest aspects, for him does not exist; he has never stopped even to imagine how the man feels whose guilt is removed by the precious blood of Christ; he regards faith according to Paul as being "disciplined obedience"; he has no inkling of what it means simply to accept the gift which Christ offered on the cross; he has never stopped seriously to inquire what Paul meant when he said, with reference to Christ, "who loved me and gave Himself for me." We are not without admiration for the type of life which Dr. Peabody represents; we do not discount the high ethical quality of that unruffled placidity amid the sorrows of the world which is engendered by Unitarianism at its best. But there are depths in human life and in man's relation to God which Dr. Peabody and the agnostic "liberals" in evangelical churches have never sounded. And it is into those depths that the word of the Cross alone can go.

*Princeton*

J. GRESHAM MACHEN.

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## HISTORICAL THEOLOGY

*Christian Ways of Salvation.* Lectures delivered before Auburn Theological Seminary, Auburn, N. Y., on the Russell Foundation, Easter Week, 1922. By GEORGE W. RICHARDS, D.D., LL.D., Professor of Church History in the Theological Seminary of the Reformed Church in the United States, Lancaster, Pa. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1923. Pp. ix, 332. Price \$2.50.

The scope of this book is exceedingly broad; Dr. Richards attempts nothing less than a survey of "the ways of salvation" both pre-Christian and Christian, and among the "Christian ways of salvation" he treats "the way of Jesus," "the ways of the apostles," "the ancient Catholic way," "the Orthodox [Greek] Catholic way," "the Roman Catholic

way," "the Evangelical ways," "the way of the humanists." But it would be a mistake to suppose that history is here treated for its own sake; on the contrary, it is regarded always in the light of Dr. Richards' own religious views.

The result, from the historical point of view, is disastrous. Dr. Richards is convinced that doctrine is entirely secondary in religion; creed, he believes, should spring from conduct, and not conduct from creed. The intellect, in other words, is here dethroned, and "experience" is put in its place. The reader cannot expect that a book which is so hostile to precise definitions will be clear or self-consistent; and as a matter of fact the author seems to be thoroughly satisfied with the inconsistency and vagueness of his book. These qualities appear in particularly destructive fashion in the treatment of the New Testament, where, it must be plainly said, the author shows very little acquaintance with the historical problems. It is impossible to write history except on the basis of the sources, and in the present book the sources are almost altogether neglected. Thus when it suits his purpose Dr. Richards quotes, apparently as authentic, words of Jesus contained in the Fourth Gospel; yet the Fourth Gospel is regarded elsewhere as representing a late stage in the progress of Christian thought. A similar lack of critical grounding appears everywhere in the treatment of the life of Jesus and of apostolic history. The reconstruction is based neither upon the New Testament as it stands nor upon any conceivable critical theory with regard to the New Testament. Thus the book displays an amazing atrophy of the historical sense so far as the beginnings of Christianity are concerned.

Nevertheless, taken as a whole, the book is by no means negligible. If it does not contribute to our knowledge of the history of early Christianity, it does present with vigor a point of view which in some respects is distinctive and interesting. Completely rejecting the historical basis of evangelicalism in the supernaturalism of the Bible, Dr. Richards yet believes himself to be an adherent of "evangelical" Christianity. This belief in itself would be entirely without interest, owing to the looseness with which traditional terminology is used in the modern Church. But the interesting thing is that Dr. Richards not only calls himself an evangelical, but is even willing to be (somewhat mildly) polemic against tendencies which he regards as not evangelical—notably Unitarianism and humanism. Thus it is said on pp. 252 ff.:

"Of course the Unitarians of today no longer hold Socinian doctrines. Priestley, Channing, and Martineau have not lived in vain since Socinus died. But the standpoint and spirit of the Italian reformers are still characteristic of certain kinds of liberal theology. Jesus is reduced to a teacher, the gospel to a law, and the Church to a society of ethical culture. And this view of Christianity is offered as a substitute, not simply for Roman Catholicism; but for evangelical Protestantism,—a modernized gospel trimmed down to fit the categories of an evolutionary hypothesis and of historical criticism, of economic programs and of utilitarian ethics."

This is finely and truly said. But the great trouble is that Dr. Richards'

own view seems logically to result in just such a tendency as that which he here condemns. The grace of God, which is at the basis of evangelical Christianity, means that, instead of our doing something, God has done something for us in the offering up of His Son for our sins. Thus evangelical Christianity is rooted altogether in an historical fact; it is rooted altogether in the Cross of Christ. Modern liberalism, on the other hand, seeks to ground it in a present experience which is really independent of the Cross, and the consequence is that the religion of the "liberal" Church—the great modern movement to which Dr. Richards belongs—is not a religion of divine grace but merely a form of legalism. It does credit to Dr. Richards that he finds something wrong in Unitarianism, but wherever the modern liberal movement to which our author lends his full support is relieved of the necessity of using traditional language and of avoiding offense to conservative Christians, one of the most palpable results is an exchange of pulpits with Unitarian ministers. The truth is that in rejecting the historic basis of evangelicalism Dr. Richards, despite all his struggles, cannot permanently help falling into a type of religious life which grounds salvation not upon God but upon man.

A number of false alternatives underlie the whole tendency which is represented by the present book. One such alternative is that between doctrine and personal relationships. It is sometimes said that orthodox Christianity puts doctrine in place of Christ. But the plain fact is that no personal relationship is possible without doctrine: every relationship to a human friend, for example, has an intellectual element in it; it depends upon a host of observations, treasured up in the mind, with regard to the character of the friend. So in making doctrine a mere product of experience, Dr. Richards is rejecting the knowledge of the real Christ; and it may almost be questioned whether what he calls "Christ" has anything to do with any real person who exists or ever has existed. In other words, in rejecting doctrine Dr. Richards is falling back upon mysticism; and it is of the very essence of mysticism to be out of connection with an historical person such as Jesus. It is no wonder that such a writer does violence to the historical sources of information about Jesus of Nazareth. But the truly Christian attitude is entirely different; the Christian man is interested above everything else in the personal identity of the Lord whom he loves and adores with that Jesus who lived in Palestine in the first century of our era. For upon that identity depends the question whether the Lord really gave Himself for our sins or whether we are still under the just condemnation of the righteous God.

Dr. Richards loves to speak about the "Christlike God"; indeed he represents the type of religion represented by that phrase as superseding all other types. The phrase is perhaps not entirely incapable of being understood in a Christian sense; at least it does not seem to the Christian man so blasphemous as another phrase, "the Godlike man," which our author once permits himself to apply to Jesus (p. 278). But even the former phrase is often being used with antitheistic implications. And

as so used it shows what a great gulf is fixed between modern liberalism and Jesus of Nazareth. For whatever may be thought of Jesus, He was certainly a theist; He certainly believed in a supreme Creator and Ruler of the universe; He certainly nurtured His life with the Old Testament Scriptures in which that supreme Creator and Ruler was made known. An antitheistic mysticism can certainly never rightfully bear the name of Jesus.

Dr. Richards closes his book with an exposition of the tentative confession of faith which in 1921 was submitted to the General Assembly of the United Free Church of Scotland. This creed, from the Christian point of view is exceedingly bad. But it is not quite so bad as it would be if it fully met Dr. Richards's requirements. "Nothing," Dr. Richards says, "that must be proved by logical process, historical investigation, miraculous signs, or dictatorial pronouncements, ought to be made an essential part of a creed" (p. 305). The new creed, vague and unsatisfactory as it is, is not quite so absurd as it would be if this monstrous principle were really carried out; for it does contain, for example, the name "Jesus" and does imply some connection between "the Lord Jesus Christ" and the historical personage that is designated by that name. It does, therefore, contain essential elements which must be proved by "historical investigation"; it does not quite meet the requirements which Dr. Richards lays down.

Dr. Richards takes pains to point out certain differences between the new tentative creed and the Westminster Confession. But he seems not to be fully aware of the greatest difference of all. The greatest difference is that the Westminster Confession was regarded by its authors as true, whereas the new creed is regarded by Dr. Richards not really as true, but merely as a temporary expression of Christian experience. If a thing is true it cannot become false by the passage of a generation, or for that matter by the passage of millions upon millions of years. To say that a creed is a mere expression of Christian experience and that the next generation will need a new creed which will be expressed in the forms which will then be in vogue, is to make the formation of any creed a mere piece of solemn trifling. Dr. Richards has not merely rejected parts of the Christian faith, but he has accepted an epistemology which destroys *all* of the Christian faith. The living God, the redeeming work of Christ, the hope of meeting Christ in glory—all such things really cease to be to Dr. Richards facts which will stand though all else fail, but they become merely imaginations of men's hearts which place in symbolic form a mystic experience which is independent of them.

Full sympathy should indeed be accorded to those who feel obliged to effect this separation between truth and life, and between knowledge and faith, to those who are thus attempting to withdraw from the apologetic battle of the present day. The battle is indeed sore. But the Christian man cannot avoid it. Christianity, if it has any reality at all, is founded upon facts; and facts if they be facts cannot be changed to suit the mood of the moment. The Christian life will never be maintained if



Dr. Richards is correct about the nature of Christian doctrine; Christian experience cannot be founded upon agnosticism.

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*Ebenzer*. Reviews of the Work of the Missouri Synod during Three Quarters of a Century. Edited by W. H. T. DAU. St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House. 1922. 12vo., pp. viii, 536. Price \$2.

This is a collection of thirty-seven articles by as many different authors, giving history, observations, and appreciations of the seventy-five years progress of the Missouri Synod Lutheran Church from 1847 to 1922. Each author was chosen to write on the subject which he was best fitted to present, and the whole work is edited by Professor Dau, who writes the preface and the concluding article. The book is generously illustrated, well-printed, silken-bound, and is a volume of substantial worth.

The historic position of the Missouri Synod in its relation to other evangelical churches of Protestantism, and to other branches of the Lutheran fold, is well-known. And, so far as these articles go, it is never forgotten. The Missouri Synod sets up the claim to be the truly Lutheran church in America. "*Gottes Wort und Luthers Lehre rein*" is its watchword. Every semblance of Unionism or tolerance of lodges and secret societies with their avowed moralism cutting athwart Luther's doctrine of Justification by Faith alone, is uncompromisingly rejected. It is of course easy for any church claiming to possess the solely correct interpretation of the Bible truth, and persuading itself that all other Christian bodies are "sects" to be held aloof from, it is easy for such a body to become dogmatically self-satisfied even to the point of theological Phariseism. And the boastful spirit is not so conspicuously absent in these articles that one could not unintentionally overtake it. See, for instance, pp. 285, 315, 371, 448, 461, 493, 531.

Some isolated statements are capable of qualification in the interest even of "Lutheran truth." The assertion that "to write the life of Walther is to write the history of the Missouri Synod" (p. 22), must not be taken too literally. And the claim that "from the very beginning the Missourians were devoted to the cause of a united Lutheran Church in America" (p. 110), could only be substantiated by deciding what is meant by "a united Lutheran Church in America." Since the merger of 1918, there exists "The United Lutheran Church in America." But the Missouri Synod is not a part of it. If by a "united" Lutheran Church is meant that all other branches of the Lutheran family should join the Missouri Synod, then the devotion to unity that is claimed is incontestably accurate. Otherwise, it needs explanation. The phrase "the Reformed contempt of the Sacrament," used in the same article (p. 116), would sound better if it were frankly explained that the Reformed have never contemned the true Sacrament. They have boldly and always rejected the *ex opere operato* theory of Transubstantiation as well as the view of Consubstantiation. They do not believe that the physical Jesus is anywhere hidden in, with, or under the sacramental elements. They have stood (with the possible exception of Zwingli and his school) for the spiritual presence of Christ, of whose presence the elements are the sign