

THE PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL REVIEW

VOLUME VIII

APRIL 1910

NUMBER 2

MODERN POSITIVE THEOLOGY.

During the last few years considerable interest has been aroused in theological circles in Germany over a movement which goes by the name of "Modern Positive Theology" or "Modern Theology of the Old Faith". This movement has originated in the conservative camp. Its demand is for a theology which shall preserve the Gospel or the "Old Faith", and restate it in terms of modern thought. It is contended that the modern liberal theology has really destroyed the Gospel in its attempt to modernize it, while the old evangelical theology has erred in identifying the Gospel with worn out forms of theological thought in which from age to age the Gospel has found expression. The Gospel or the Old Faith, it is said, can be maintained in its integrity and given a theological formulation which shall render it intelligible to the "modern consciousness"—whatever that may be. The leaders of this movement are General Superintendent Theodor Kaftan, and Professors Seeberg of Berlin, Grützmacher of Rostock, and Beth of Vienna.

In order to understand this movement it is necessary to take a brief survey of the theological situation in Germany.¹

¹On this subject *vid.* F. Traub, *Aus der dogmatischen Arbeit der Gegenwart, Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche XVI*, pp. 429-483; also E. Troeltsch, *Rückblick auf ein halbes Jahrhundert der theol. Wissenschaft, Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie, Jahrg. 51, N. F. 16, Heft 2, pp. 97-135.*

official sense, he must at least include the North Galatian Christians. But the Epistle clearly presupposes that the "Churches of Galatia" had a common origin and a common life. They cannot therefore have included the churches both of North Galatia and of South Galatia. Therefore they must be identified with the churches of North Galatia alone.

On p. 15, note 4, line 3, read *Δαράνδοις* instead of *Δαράνδοις*; on p. 139, line 2 from the bottom, read *ἤκουεν* instead of *ἤκουσεν*; on p. 151, note 7, read Act. 11, 26, instead of Act. 11, 27; on p. 184, line 16, insert *οἱ* before *πρεσβύτεροι*.

Of course, a number of details in Dr. Steinmann's book might give rise to criticism. For example it may well be doubted whether Dr. Steinmann is correct in interpreting Acts. xv:38 as meaning that what Paul objected to in Mark was his lack of sympathy with the freedom with which Paul offered the Gospel to the Gentiles without requiring observance of the law. But even where the author's suggestions cannot be definitely accepted, they are instructive. Dr. Steinmann's book simply compels attention from all branches of the Church, and will help to put a stop to the indifference with which Protestant scholars have too often received the work of their Roman Catholic brethren.

Princeton.

J. GRESHAM MACHEN.

THE PAULINE EPISTLES. A CRITICAL STUDY. By ROBERT SCOTT, M.A., D.D., Bombay. (The Literature of the New Testament). Edinburgh; T. & T. CLARK, 38 George Street. 1909. Pp. 376. (Imported by CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS, New York. \$2.00 net.)

According to Dr. Scott, I Cor. (except xv. 20-34), II Cor. (except vi. 14-vii. 1, xiii. 13-14), Rom. i-xi, Galatians, Philippians, and Rom. xvi. 1-16, 21-24 were written by Paul; Ephesians, Hebrews, I Peter, I Thess. iv-v, II Thess. i-ii, Rom. xii, xiii, xv, I Cor. xv. 20-34, II Cor. vi. 14-vii. 1 were written by Silas, to whom is due also the Gospel of Matthew in its final editing and perhaps some slight elements in Acts; I Thess. i, iii, II Thess. iii, Colossians, Philemon, and probably also Rom. xiv were written by Timothy, who is also responsible for the final form of Mark; II Timothy, I Timothy, and Titus were written by Luke, the author of the Third Gospel and Acts. The average reader will probably be somewhat startled at the boldness of the theory, but such a feeling will receive no sympathy from the author. Dr. Scott is apparently unaware that he has said anything revolutionary, or anything that requires special proof. The widely accepted results of modern criticism are treated with as scant consideration as the tradition of the first centuries. Neither is deemed worthy of any very elaborate refutation.

Dr. Scott's re-arrangement of the New Testament writings "rests exclusively on internal data; mainly on theological ideas and literary style". Criticism has here become astonishingly uncritical. A criticism which is keen enough to separate four chapters of the Thessalonian Epistles and three chapters of Romans from the genuine writings of Paul should have been sufficiently keen to prevent the assignment of

these chapters to the author of Hebrews, and Hebrews to the author of Ephesians, and Ephesians to the author of I Peter. Of course, an abundance of supplementary hypotheses stands ready to command. Agreement occurring where the theory calls for divergence is explained by imitation of the master Paul or by personal acquaintance between the several authors or by the work of a common redactor. Divergence where there should be agreement is similarly disposed of. As for the identification of the various authors, that gives Dr. Scott little difficulty. We are looking for friends of Paul, since the Pauline basis of the writings in question must be explained, and suitable friends are not numerous enough to cause any bewilderment. The names associated with the name of Paul at the beginnings of the epistles may often give us the clue. The men designated by those names felt that they had a right to prefix to their own names the name of their master, since they were expressing his thoughts, and at times were even reproducing his very words. In some places, Dr. Scott's book reads almost like a burlesque on criticism. Thus on p. 24, in speaking of the "second, or exhortation group", the author says, "If the unity of the group is established it will follow that the authorship belongs to Silas", and a few lines below, under the "third, or Timothean group," we read, "If the former group is by Silas, it will follow that this supplementary work is by Timothy". On the whole, there is little genuine argument, and that little is repetitious and poorly arranged.

Despite its faults, the book contains some interesting suggestions. Dr. Scott is well worth hearing when he calls attention to the astonishing richness of a creative period like the period of primitive Christianity as affording a better explanation of differences between various writings than is given by the hypothesis of wide divergence in date. And the suggestion that differences of style between the Pauline Epistles are to be explained as due to the work of disciples who had the function of formulating the thought of their leader cannot be dismissed without consideration. The appreciation of the work of Luke which forms the substance of the last paragraph of the book also displays real insight. But when Dr. Scott says that "it is in the qualities of breadth and sanity of judgment that Luke is the most modern of the Scripture writers, and most allied to ourselves", we moderns may well hesitate before we choose Dr. Scott as our representative in the latter quality.

The most that can be said for the accenting of Greek words throughout the book is that it is sometimes correct.

Princeton.

J. GRESHAM MACHEN.

JESUS AND THE GOSPEL. Christianity Justified in the Mind of Christ.

By JAMES DENNEY, D.D., Professor of New Testament Language, Literature and Theology, United Free Church College, Glasgow; Author of "The Death of Christ". New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son. 1909. 8vo.; pp. ix, 368.

Dr. Denney's latest book puts us under the strange necessity of heartily praising its contents and at the same time deploring most