



BIBLIOTHECA SACRA.

ARTICLE I.

MODERN THEOLOGY IN ITS RELATION TO PERSONAL PIETY AND CHRISTIAN WORK.

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RELIGION is union with God; and theology is the science of such union. All upward-moving impulses of man's nature, whether longings of the heart or generalizations of the intellect, lead towards the Divine. Justin Martyr tells us he learned in the school of Plato that "the end of all philosophy is to see God."¹ The great desire of Moses, "the man of God," was to behold the glory of the Lord. And the heart of every Christian hope is to find in Jesus Christ the way to our Father in heaven. What the devout Greek sought after, and what the godly Hebrew hoped for, is given the believer in Christ; for he not only taught us that the pure in heart shall see God, but went on to declare that whoever truly saw the Son of God saw the Father also. Here, then, is the source of Christian piety and the source of Christian theology, the union of God and man through "the God-man," as Origen called him, even Jesus Christ. The heathen worships the Divine Nature; the Jew adores the Divine Spirit; but the Chris-

¹Dial. c. Tryph. ii.

tian becomes one with God through fellowship with the Divine Man.¹ In these three ways of approach to the Divine we find invincible evidence, growing in its cogency, for the existence of God, and man's vital relation to him. Through the approach of the Gentile, we see God in the universe, and learn of him by thinking over his thoughts after him. Through the theocratic approach of the Jew, through law and prophecy and holy of holies, we hear the voice of the Judge of all the earth, whose awful categorical imperative, "Thou shalt," echoing in every soul of man, declares him responsible, and responsible to God. But especially in Jesus, the new and living way of approach, does God tell us all that human speech can reveal, and all that human life can illustrate, of the character, will, and love of God. It is certainly true, as the Ritschl school of theologians have powerfully set forth, that in reading the Gospel accounts of Jesus, in listening to his words, and in reverently looking into the profound depths of his consciousness of the ever-indwelling, abiding presence of God, we receive an overwhelming conviction that God is, that he loves man, and that he is a rewarder of all them that diligently seek him. He is, for us, the fullness of the Godhead bodily to meet all the emptiness of our hearts and lives.

It is gratifying to observe that, at this point, there is substantial agreement among Christian theologians. Herrmann says, they all understand personal Christianity to be "a communion of the soul with the living God through the mediation of Christ"; for without such communion, there can be no religion at all.² It is also gratifying to find the new theology of Germany emphasizing what is so familiar to us in America, namely, the inseparable connec-

¹ Cf. Lutterbeck, *Die N. Test. Lehrbegriffe* (Mayence, 1852), S. 96.

² *Communion of the Christian with God* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1895), p. 7.

tion between Christian life and doctrine. We find it easy and natural to follow Herrmann further, when he adds: "For a church which desires to be really a fellowship of believers, there can be no theological task more important than that of setting forth the inner life of faith, or that communion with God in which we really find ourselves at one" (p. 12). It is plain, however, that, in the work of analyzing our Christian experience into doctrines of faith, there is great danger of subjectivity, and, unless we possess some objective norm and test of teaching, there may be almost as many theologies as there are experiences. What is this norm? Is it the Bible, as most Protestants hold? Or church authority, as the Romanists teach? Or the inner life of Jesus, as the Ritschl theology maintains? Whichever it be, on the admitted principle that piety and doctrine are in vital unity, it is a perfectly fair proposition to test the value of the experience by the kind of theology which it produces; and, what is more important, to judge the value of the theology advocated by the kind of piety which it develops.

In matters of theology, as in all subjects that involve discussion, men usually occupy three positions. There are, first, the conservative theologians, who accept the Bible as supreme, supernatural revelation, the Divine Christ as Redeemer and Lord, and hold the doctrines commonly called evangelical. Farthest removed from these is a radical party of scientists and theologians, who may be described in general as rationalists or Unitarians in religion. Between these come theologians whom the Germans call "mediating." They may be briefly characterized as orthodox in their emotions and devotional utterances, but rationalistic in their criticisms and intellectual apprehension of religion. This mediating theology of our day sprang especially from the teachings of Schleiermacher in Germany and Coleridge in England; it may also be wid-

ened to include the school of Ritschl, which in its changing form is coming to represent the middle party in German theology. Now all these speakers and writers on religion claim to have had experience of some relation to God. Each claims that his experience is the best; and, as a consequence, that the theology which grew out of this best experience, or which helped produce this best experience, must be the true theology. It is the object of this article to consider briefly the piety and theology of these different schools, and learn, as we proceed in the discussion, which seems best to represent the fullness and strength of Christianity.

Jesus' account of himself and his relations to them who believe on him, in the Synoptist Gospels, may be summed up in man's coming to him as the divine source of pardon and peace, the entrance to the kingdom of heaven; and in man's going forth from him, as the center of all power and blessing, to carry the gospel to others. He says (Matt. xi. 27 f.), All things are delivered unto me of my Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him. Because of this fullness of divine revelation and Godhead in Jesus Christ, he said, next, Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Then to the believer, the man with peace in his soul a similar statement is made (Matt. xxviii. 18 f.), All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth,—Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all nations. That "Come" and that "Go," with the Divine Christ between, may be said to sum up Christian faith and practice. In other words, we can test our conceptions of Christianity by their ability or inability to produce piety well-pleasing in the sight of Jesus, and to promote activity in the work of spreading the gospel, such as our Lord enjoined and his apostles so abundantly illustrated. Personal godliness and mission labors

will try our experience and doctrines, whether they be of God or we speak from ourselves. To make bad men good, and good men better, is the work and the proof of the true theology.

PIETY AND DOCTRINE.

What, then, are the thoughts with which religion must begin? The reply is not remote. As all thinking begins with a consciousness of self and not self; so must religious conceptions start from consciousness of self and consciousness of God. He that cometh unto God must believe that he is. The man who has the most vivid and vital and overwhelming sense of his responsibility to a personal, holy, loving God will be most desirous of becoming like him. It matters little, for our present study, whether we suppose a man to find a certain idea of God in his experience and express it in his doctrines of faith, or to frame from other sources the same doctrines and reproduce them in his life. His piety and his theology will be upon the same plane. Applying these considerations to the conceptions of God in current theology, we find the more radical school regarding the Divine either from the theistic point of view, as a far-off Providence, or from the evolutionary position, as the *nisus formativus*, the immanent constructive force in the universe, or from the more ethical standpoint, as a power not ourselves that makes for righteousness. Such views, of course, exclude belief in the supernatural, in miracles, in the Bible as divine Revelation, and in Jesus Christ as superhuman Saviour and Lord. This theology differs in no essential respect from the ethical theology of the Greeks; the result being, so far as the religious character of its advocates goes, only a life of natural virtue. The same dualism which appeared in the collapse of Greek philosophy, reappears in the views of its modern representatives. Their theology and their ethics will not agree. For example, Huxley argued triumphantly

that man is an automaton moved by natural forces; but in his later years he declared his conviction that man must fight against nature, in order to save morality. In like manner, Frederic Harrison despairs of any rational harmony between science and ethics. A choice must be made between what reason seems to make out of the world and the love and spiritual longings of man's higher nature. In other words, religion will not grow from mere reason; to save it we must turn to what Paul calls faith, and Tennyson vision, if man's noblest life is to find expression.¹ The roots of man's moral nature thrust themselves down into darkness and mystery, feeling by faith after God, just as instinctively as the branches of his reason stretch themselves up into the light, seeking by sight him in whom is no darkness at all.

✓ The attributes ascribed to God in the Scriptures are personality, spirituality, infinity, omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, justice, holiness, goodness, truth, love, Fatherhood; and correspondingly, the virtues ascribed to the man worshipping such a God are reverence, sonship, faith, love, joy, peace, prayerfulness, gentleness, humility, compassion, gratitude, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and resisting unto blood, striving against sin. Now radical theologians, ignoring or rejecting various biblical attributes of God, are forced to narrow and limit the domain of religious devotion. Some set aside the personality of God, others his justice, still others his power to help man when he prays for deliverance. The result for piety is, that by just so much as Jehovah is made smaller by just so much will man's relations to him contract. We finally fall out of all real religious relations to God. The lowest forms of religion yet found living on earth have ever shown two fundamental beliefs: they believe in a revelation from God—the deity speaks to man;

¹ Cf. *Critical Review*, April, 1899, p. 184.

and they believe in the efficacy of prayer—man can speak to God. But the rationalistic and ethical type of theology to which we have referred, has so far the character of a manufactured article, that it nearly or quite eliminates both these essentials. Its great value consists in its general recognition of religion as rooted in the very thoughts which make the universe rational, and in the necessity of ethical principles as a support to human life in all its manifestations. The virtues, however, which it calls forth are just those of Stoic or later Platonic ethics,—manliness, justice, self-control, wisdom, and the things which promote social and national well-being. Sociology and state socialism absorbed religion and ethics under the teachings of ancient natural theology; and it is not without significance that liberal Christians in our day proclaim social regeneration as the chief end of man. They lay claim to other virtues which are peculiar to Christianity, especially faith, hope, and love; but it is not shown how these graces grow out of their theology, and when it comes to the work of faith and the labor of love the fruits are very unlike those of the New Testament churches.

The mediating divines speak in more decided tones respecting things Christian; but, so far as piety is to be regarded as a direct result of personal communion with God, they are often more radical than the Unitarians or the men of the *Protestantenverein*. If there is any one thing which Ritschl and his followers oppose, it is the *unio mystica*, or the idea that a Christian has anything to do directly with God in nature, or even God in the Old Testament for that matter. Only in Jesus, and only in the inner life of Jesus as we know it historically in his earthly ministry, it is held, can we know God. Protestant theologians, from the Reformation down, have loved to think of Jesus Christ as the preëxistent Son of God, by whom he made the worlds; the Divine Logos, who was the revela-

tion dimly seen as the Mind of the Universe by the philosophers of Greece, and as the Angel of the Lord in the Old Testament ; the Mediator, whom Abraham and the saints of Israel dimly beheld, and upon whom, as the light for the Gentiles and the glory of Israel, through shadow and cloud all their hopes rested. But now this newest theology of Germany says, We cannot know any Christ save the Jesus who taught three years in Palestine. The familiar theology has held an ever-living Lord, the same really yesterday, to-day, and forever, who for a few years appeared incarnate and "emptied" of his glory on earth ; the new theology, however, teaches that this exceptional period in his existence is the only part of it which manifests God, and is the only revelation of God on which Christian faith may build. Christ had no real preëxistence, certainly none with which our faith has anything to do ; neither has he any existence for us after the crucifixion, except such as faith demands for the one in whose company we learned how to enter into vital communion with God. But such a limiting of Divine revelation to the life of Jesus, and to only a part of that life, is not in harmony with the teaching and piety of the Old Testament saints, nor with the teaching and devotion of Jesus himself, and is decidedly at variance with the doctrine and experience of the apostles and the apostolic church. It is true that the supreme revelation of God is to be found in Jesus Christ. But it surely does not follow that, because grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, no law for us also was given by Moses ; or, because Jesus taught us to see the love of the heavenly Father in God's care of the lilies and the sparrows, there is no nourishment for our piety in the Psalmist's pointing us to the Lord as our shepherd, or in Paul's statement that God sent rain from heaven and fruitful seasons to fill men's hearts with food and gladness, or in the assurance of Peter that, even among devout Gen-

tiles, he that feared God and worked righteousness is accepted with him (Acts x. 35).

Will not the piety which keeps company, as does that of the Moravian Brethren, with Jesus as Creator, speaking through all his works to the child of God ; will not the devotion of Puritan and Covenanter, which tunes itself to the harp of David, and at the same time, with a fervor certainly unsurpassed among newer theologians, clings to Christ as the altogether lovely one, and crowns him Lord of all,—will not such a piety, does not such a piety, show a breadth, a likeness, to that of Old Testament and New Testament believers, and a kinship with that of all confessors and martyrs and men of God, such as a more negative attitude towards God's wider revelation has not yet exhibited? The devotion which breathes through psalms, hymns, liturgies, and books of edification never fails to hear the voice of God in nature, in human history, in the witness of the soul, in prophets and apostles, as well as in the words of Jesus. Similar results appear in the use of the means of grace. Of these the Reformed theology makes prominent the Word of God, the sacraments, and prayer, and it will hardly be considered uncharitable to maintain that these are most used and insisted upon by those who hold the wider view of revelation. They are the men who contend that their devotion finds inspiration, instruction, and revelation in all the Scriptures; while the piety of the monist finds little more than the God of nature speaking through men of genius, in the Bible; and the mediating theologian either blends the inspiration of the Scriptures with pantheistic conceptions, which paralyze personal devotion, or finds in the Bible a God who bids us do our duty, touched by an emotional sense of relation to God, and all will be well—a categorical imperative colored by feeling, which offers piety little aid, because man must really save himself. The mediating men,

who press the immanence of God towards pantheistic positions, cripple personal religion in at least four directions. By their impersonal view of God they chill the prayer of petition and thanksgiving. By confusing the life of God and man, they confuse our hopes of personal immortality, and diminish the encouragements and rewards held out to virtuous living. By making good and evil but different degrees in the development of the one Divine Principle, they blunt our moral sense, and put a kind of passive resignation in place of an active religious life. And by making all human acts part of a divine movement, they deaden man's feeling of responsibility and guilt. "It claims for all men what Christianity claims for its own elect."¹

The Kantian interpretation of the Bible also discourages devotion, for its Trinity of God, Virtue, and Immortality still leaves us on the ground of self-redemption. Its gospel is, "We can save ourselves, because we must." The Ritschlian use of the Bible as an aid to devotion is limited further by an inadequate view of sin, which neither rouses in man a terrible sense of his danger, nor kindles in piety the deepest sense of gratitude and love. For this newer school, the world as a hindrance to the coming of God's kingdom, and the evil which goes with such a hindrance, come in incidentally, and have no such place, in the good fight of faith, as the experience of most Christians find them to occupy. The Bible representation of God as holy and besetting man behind and before is not hung up in the place of devotion. Ritschl finds the origin of religion in the dualism to which we referred in our remarks on Huxley. Out of the conflict between man's feeling of dependence upon nature and his consciousness that as a spiritual being he should rule over nature, religion arose.² But there is no reference to God in the origin of religion; Rit-

¹ Frothingham, *Transcendentalism in New England*, pp. 119 f.

² *Rechtf. u. Versöhn*, III, S. 189.

schl finds him also to be something incidental, inferred, and only subjectively necessary, as a "helping conception," in man's picture of the way he is to overcome the opposing world. For this very reason, therefore, because he finds no help in nature or the God of the Old Testament, Ritschl says Christian theology and nurture have little use for such sources of instruction.

In the use of the church and sacraments, there is only one respect in which the new theology seems to make them of equal value for the religious life with the older teachings; that is, in the great importance ascribed by the school of Ritschl to the church as the birthplace of the believer. Many beautiful things are said of this home of the soul on earth. But when we inquire how the church aids men to faith and holy living, we are met by a cloud of generalities. The church is made to take the place of the *unio mystica*; and those who grow up within her pale, in a mysterious way become Christians. Instead of personal communion with God in the church, we are offered a religious "atmosphere." Instead of personal conversion in the church, we receive an "impression" of Christ. The devotional meetings which have marked the life of the church from the apostles down, are denounced as unchristian, and the church is described as a moral kingdom on earth.

There seems to be similar deficiency in the doctrine of prayer. Certainly the prayer which Herrmann, author of the most devotional book of this school, teaches, appears poor and colorless when compared with the worship of Luther or Knox or Baxter or Edwards. He says that the life of faith seeks constant communion with God; and this communion, opposed by the world, leads us, first of all, to thank God for his goodness, and, with our thanks, seek help by submission to the divine will. Protestant theologians heretofore have found that the Scriptures and their

own experience included adoration, confession, and petition, as well as thanksgiving, in prayer. But, beyond trust and gratitude, Herrmann's experience finds little left for prayer (p. 246). He admits that faith allows us to ask also for earthly blessings, such as daily bread, where their absence would threaten the peace of the soul; but he declares it a "shameful misuse of prayer to ask for trifles which have really no significance for our inner life." His experience seems more circumscribed than was that of Franke, whose petitions for all the details of his orphanage, schools, and missions in Halle, received such wonderful answers of blessing. Fichte told Von Kottwitz, who was engaged in like labors in Berlin, "The child prays, the man resolves"; but when the man of prayer told the philosopher how God had answered his cries for help, Fichte replied, with tears: "My dear Baron, my philosophy cannot reach as far as that." The marvelous work of George Müller in Bristol, and the experience of many godly men, who have proved the Lord in their petitions as these theologians have not done, and cannot do on principle, show that much of the domain of prayer lies outside Herrmann's conception of it. His experience and his doctrines of faith both follow closely those of his master, Ritschl. That great theologian said that four principles preëminently marked his teachings: there was (1) the fundamental doctrine of justification through Christ; then followed, as result, (2) "faith in Providence," "a thing of which," he said, "an ordinary orthodox man knows nothing"; (3) patience, declaring impatience "the mark of all Pietists and sectarians"; and (4) humble performance of one's duty.¹ That is, practical Christianity means, Trust in God, and do your duty. It follows, naturally enough, that the devotion, the worship, of such Christianity, will have nothing emotional in it; emotional religion is Pie-

¹ Albrecht Ritschl's *Leben*, by his son, O. Ritschl, Bd. II, 285.

tism or Methodism, and this school has such horror of the "mystic piety" of these movements that it allows only man's intellect and will to engage in the worship of Almighty God. Confession of sin is little heard of, and there are few requests for particular things, the doctrine of Divine Providence being urged so as to leave not much room for prayer. God loves us all, and can do all things; he will care for us without our telling him what we want. There is little heard, also, in this devotion, of sanctification; I find no reference to the Holy Ghost in Herrmann's book on "Communion with God." And, as we have observed already, such things as revivals, prayer-meetings, testifying for Christ, and what we call personal work, are all opposed. The chief defect of this new theology of Divine Providence is that it understands by providence only God's natural government of the universe, his blessings upon the evil and the good, rather than any special care of the righteous. No distinction is made between God as Spirit and the Holy Ghost, the Comforter; hence the *testimonium Spiritus sancti*, taking the things of Christ and revealing them to personal experience, and many other tender, special, even supernatural inbreathings of this "mother" manifestation of God, are put out of the place of prayer. The Holy Ghost Kaftan calls "the working of God in the world," also the "principle of a morally new life"; but it is not personal. Nitzsch terms it "a real, divine potency which is not created, but also not personal."¹ There is no personal Spirit in devotion, because there is no personal God in devotion, except as reflected in the historic Christ. What it means to strike out of Christian experience, from apostolic days down, the Holy Spirit and all that is ascribed to his peculiar ministry, can only be faintly imagined. That it would be a paralysis, if not an utter

¹ For references, see my *Nicene Theology* (Chicago Seminary Press, 1896), p. 256.

overthrow, of all Christian piety, seems evident. It is true this newer theology pleads in a very manly way for everyday duties, and offers just criticism of mere sentimentality and emotionalism in religion; it exalts the kingdom of God and the church; it shows the danger of making a sort of indulgence system out of the doctrine of justification by faith, unless it be kept in vital connection with our daily actions; and it constantly warns against holding doctrines that we cannot or dare not put in practice. Especially praiseworthy is its demand that our devotion be Christian, and purged from all foreign elements. Mysticism, the inner light, and all fanaticism, on the one hand, as well as all legalism, or salvation by good works, on the other, are pronounced but pagan piety.¹

These strong general positions, and above all the claim to be practical in teaching a theology that grows out of experience, have attracted many followers to the school of Ritschl. But when we draw nearer to this theology, the shadows cast by its general excellences are so deep that we can scarcely find the way to our particular duty. We are met everywhere by an indefiniteness like unto that of the radical theologians. Eike, the last and most praised historian of this movement, points out in detail how it is everywhere pervaded by lack of "immediateness," of direct relation to God or Christ or moral ideals.² And such generalities are the death of prayer and devotion. Herrmann and Kaftan and Harnack, and other disciples of Ritschl in both Europe and America, declare that out of their religious experience certain doctrines of faith have arisen, and that they have the indirect character complained of. But the query at once is suggested, How does it happen that

¹ Cf. Haug, *Die Frömmigkeit des Menschengeschlechts im Lichte des Christenthums* (Leipzig: Deichert, 1899).

² *Die theologische Schule A. Ritschls und die evangelische Kirche der Gegenwart* (Berlin: Reuter & Reichart, 1897), Bd. I, S. 21.

the experience of a thousand times as many other Christians produces doctrines of faith, that prove themselves by their works, which are of a much more direct nature? And how does it happen that these indirect views of doctrine are so similar to those which arose in the experience of Ritschl himself? Nay, further, how does it happen that doctrines of faith appear in the experience of these disciples bearing a stamp put upon them, not by the faith and religious experience of Ritschl, but by his natural temperament as a man? For Eike says: "Of most extraordinary influence upon the form of Ritschl's theology was the fact that in his mental and religious personality there was utterly lacking what we call immediateness [*Unmittelbarkeit*]." From this defect came the indirectness of his teachings. He found the nature of religion not in God, but in a thirsting for God (Ps. xlii. 3). He insists on conscience, but holds it can never come directly into contact with the supreme Ruler of ethics. He declares that love forms the substance of religion in man, but cuts personal emotion out of it. He ridicules the so-called *testimonium Spiritus sancti*, and pronounces the idea of being partakers of the Divine Nature paganism. He also denies all personal relation with the exalted Christ. He cannot recognize any personal providence of God in history, or any judgment of God now exercised upon men. He opposes any direct sinbearing by Jesus, and taught all his followers to reject the vicarious element in the atonement. He limited prayer largely to thanksgiving; and opposed asking God for material things as lying outside the spiritual providence that guards the Christian.

In most of these points the disciples of Ritschl, Häring and Kaftan leading the way, have modified the views of their master; but this general character of indirectness still clings to their teachings. From the point of view of Christian experience and Bible teachings, it seems evident

that the attempt to keep man from direct communion with God will ever lead to such practical atheism, when face to face with the universe and the history of mankind, as will seriously weaken a life of piety. If there is anything that rouses and quickens devotion, it is a sense of the nearness of God, a sense of direct relation to him. The heart of Old Testament piety is this fellowship with Jehovah, abiding under his shadow and dwelling in his tabernacle. Moses longed to see God and his glory; and the Lord spoke to him face to face. It will not do for Herrmann to say that the experience of Jewish saints involved such remote and unknown factors that it cannot be shared by us. There is only one book of praise in the Bible, and that is the Hebrew Psalter, through which Christian souls through all the centuries have been communing with God, not dreaming that they were doing an impossible thing. Ritschl himself taught¹ that the continuous element in religious history is devotion; and that the inspiration of the New Testament roots in the fact that its writers alone in their time understood and reproduced the godliness and inner meaning of the Old Testament. Their religious life was one with that of earlier saints, because it included the same conception of religion as oneness with God. Paul describes Christians as temples of the Holy Ghost, men indwelt of God, whose lives were hidden with Christ in God. John knew that God dwelt in him (1 John iv. 1-3), and that believers dwelt in God. The experience of martyrs, confessors, and saints ever since is the same. Herrmann says we may well pity the man who could read the writings of Bernard or à Kempis without a thrill in his heart and a quickening of his religious life. Yet in so far as their devotion was mystic it was, according to Ritschl, Neo-Platonism. Charles Wesley, when dying, said, "I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness." Yet in

¹ See *Leben*.

clinging to the Psalms, unless he found them indorsed by Jesus, he was not grasping a Christian hope. The fact that godly men everywhere overleap the limits of this new theology seems to be proof that it is narrower than the full expression of the Christian life. Harnack expresses his admiration of the piety of Pilgrim Fathers and German Pietists, but longs to see it grow from the theology of Ritschl. That must be held, he contends, at all costs, for it is the teaching of Jesus.¹

Here we reach the cardinal question for theology and life ; What is Jesus for us, and how are we saved by him ? Our current evangelical doctrine answers with Paul, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved ; or with Peter, Repent ye, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of sins ; or with John, The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin. But we are told, and with some truth, that we are more inclined to follow what the apostles teach about Jesus than what the Lord said himself. This objection, which is among the oldest known in church history,² takes for granted that there is a difference in value between the gospel which Jesus gave and that which the apostles declared they had received from him ; though the experience of the church seems to find in faith and devotion no distinction. Turning to Jesus, however, we hear him saying, Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest ; and, He that hath the Son hath life. How is the soul of man to relate itself to Jesus through these words ? Thousands have regarded them as the very truth of God, and, relying upon it, accepted the Lord there offered, by personal trust in him, and entered upon the life of faith. They acted on the ground of the Scriptures as the supernaturally inspired and infallible Word of God. But mod-

¹ Die Christliche Welt, 1899, No. 7.

² Cf. Celsus, in Origen, c. Celsus, ii. 13 ; iii. 39.

ern radical criticism has largely destroyed the doctrine of inspiration, and historic criticism has made the New Testament so uncertain, we are told, that we cannot be certain that Jesus uttered a single saying in it. And if we were sure that he said something or did something, Herrmann agrees with Lessing, that "accidental truths of history can never form the foundation for eternal truths of reason" or religion. As if the incarnation of Christ were an "accidental truth" of history; and religion could not include both historic truths proven by their evidence and spiritual truths supported by moral reasons; and our experience now could not live over the life set forth historically by Jesus and the apostles and verify its reality! These objections have led the newer theology to seek a place of contact with Jesus which historic criticism cannot touch. It is found in his inner life, in his consciousness of fellowship with the Father, pure and unbroken, into the secret of which fellowship he teaches us how to come. A foundation for faith is discovered in the historic fact of Jesus. As we read soberly what the apostles tell of him, he rises before us as a personal reality; we cannot escape the overwhelming impression of his life; in his sweet company we are convinced that God is our Father; and with Jesus we enter the kingdom of heaven. We do not have faith in Jesus; but in his imagined presence we learn how to have faith in God. He is not our Saviour, but reveals God, who is our Saviour. With growing convictions and fervor has Herrmann elaborated this meeting of the soul with God in the inner life of Jesus. None can fail to be impressed with the devotion and gentle mysticism of this Ritschlian theologian. Had he the pulpit gifts of Robertson of Brighton or Hofmann, he says he would gladly resign his professor's chair to go forth as a prophet of God, telling men how to meet the Father in Jesus. But we are sure, if he went out preaching, he would soon hear from the com-

mon man complaints that he could not understand the new gospel as well as the old ; and if he ever got into a prayer-meeting the "testimonies" would run strange diagonals through his theology.

What does it mean to say that our salvation starts from an "impression" made upon us by a "vision" or a "picture" of a man, the "historic Christ," who died eighteen centuries ago? Ritschl call our justification "a remembrance of his finished life work";¹ but how can I build my religious hopes upon a remembrance, got through other people, of a picture of a life? And how do I know that this inner life of Jesus, upon which Herrmann builds, is any more historic than is any fact recorded about the outer life? Is the subjective history of Jesus any more reliable than the objective? And when I get as close to the historic Christ as I can, laden with guilt and doubts, is it possible, through a vision of that sinless life, to reach the faith that saves the soul? But especially is devotion checked by the feeling that Jesus is so far away. How can I here and now enter into communion with God by means of the life that Jesus lived centuries ago? Herrmann tells me that the impression he makes upon us is such that we feel Jesus still lives. But the question remains, How does his life now help me? Luther, that hero of faith, said: "We have no painted sin, therefore we can have no painted Christ"; our present load of guilt is a great reality, how can the remote pictured Jesus take it away? Herrmann turns to the church for help in this difficulty. A succession of believers from the first have reproduced this life of Jesus, and we find it corresponds with the impression made upon us in reading the words of Christ. But there is danger of reasoning in a circle here, for the succession of believers in the church got their Christian character from the Gospel accounts of Christ. To

¹ *Unterricht in d. Chr. Religion* (2d Ed.), p. 23.

lean further upon the church as the way to Jesus seems to lead to Roman Catholic positions. Besides, multitudes of the best people in the church declare that their experience did not come in the way indicated by the new theology.

What shall we say, first of all, of the experience of the apostolic church? Herrmann says we can "lay hold of the inner life of Jesus, and make it ours, only when we let the witness of his disciples lay hold on us" (p. 63). The apostles taught out of their personal experience. Their theology was not dogmatic, but real doctrines of faith. Ritschl holds that the Pauline teachings are essentially one with those of Jesus. That means that his experience and that of the other apostles was a true Christian experience and an expression of the new life of the gospel, which we cannot expect to see surpassed. It also follows that the multitudes of Christians ever since who have had like experience expressed in like doctrines were true believers. We are here upon the ground of the one, holy Catholic and Apostolic faith, and from the point of view of experience, may urge the rule of St. Vincent, "Quod ab omnibus est creditum," against the position of Ritschl and his school, as it was first urged against Augustine and his followers.

This world-wide Christian devotion seems to contradict the theory under discussion at various points. First of all, it testifies that faith in Christ is the way to communion with God. We do not have faith *with* Jesus; we have faith *in* Jesus. Jesus is not a member in his own church with us; he is Saviour, King, Head, and Lord over his church, as all the saints have felt. There is a part of his life which we are called to imitate; but there is also a part beyond all imitation, before which the children of God bow in adoration, saying with Thomas, My Lord and my God.

This wide experience also testifies that faith is not a result of immediate contact with the inner life of Christ;

partly because no man can know the secret life of the Lord, except by his words and works, and partly, as Kaffan now admits, because there is no faith which does not include an element of knowledge. We must know who Jesus is, and what he is, before we can trust him as guide to God or personal Saviour. It is an unprofitable question to ask if faith in Christ is dependent upon the Gospels. It is historically a fact that the faith of believers has been led to him by the Gospels, and without them none have come to Christ. Faith has come by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. Herrmann agrees with this statement in so far as New Testament information forms the ground, occasion, and atmosphere in which man receives the "overwhelming impression" of the inner life of Jesus, which leads him to trust in God. That is, the believer is as a bird, whose fluttering wings are faith, but whose feet of knowledge must touch the ground of New Testament history, though, for critical reasons, it dare not rest any weight upon them. Now it is perfectly evident that the devotion of the church has never known such distinctions as walking through Bible history without bearing any weight upon it, or having our inner life meet the inner life of Jesus as the one certain fact in a chaos of critical uncertainty. Neither has the explanation that the Bible history is true religiously, while full of all uncertainties theologically and critically, played any part in the history of piety.

A third fact to be noticed is, that the vision of Jesus which the church sees in his words and the words of his apostles, contains much more than the new theology finds in it. The life of Christ, his finished work, shows more than the love of God. Wendt admits¹ that Jesus' mission was not fulfilled in revealing God as Father; his death cannot be so described. The teachings of Christ show,

¹Theolog. Literaturzeitung, 1899, No. 8.

also, the justice of God, his hatred of sin, his demand for holiness, his sending Jesus to die as sin-bearer on the cross, the victorious resurrection of Christ, his tarrying with the disciples after the resurrection, leading them in thought as he went in reality from his state of humiliation and his limited prophetic ministry, to his state of exaltation and his great highpriesthood and mediatorial reign, upon which he entered at the ascension; they show finally the gift of the Holy Spirit, for the completion of the revelation of Jesus, and the establishment of his church on earth. The new theology, arguing that creation is incidental to the Divine Being, makes Christ reveal only the moral attributes of God, and not what might be called his cosmological character, such as his power and omnipresence. Kaftan wrote in one place,¹ that Jesus could reveal God only as "holy love," and that we find "no traces of omnipotence or omnipresence" in him. But elsewhere,² in describing Jesus as the full revelation of God for us, he says that "God is known in Christ as the eternal, almighty love." Still the tendency in this school is to rob Jesus of power. He did not create the world, neither does he rule it. This is why this theology discourages praying to the God of power, the God who gives rain and food and health and home. For Peter on the sea or Paul in the storm, it has no counsel but to trust in the general providence of God. With Stephen praying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit, or Wesley singing:

"Jesus, Lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly,"

it can hardly join, for Herrmann says of prayer to Christ: "It must be carefully limited, if it is not to work great injury."³ The history of devotion in the church has rarely recorded such a warning as that. The new devotion tells us to pray *with* Jesus, but the picture of Christ's life al-

¹ Wesen der Religion, S. 338. ² S. 407. ³ Verkehr, S. 193.

ways shows him going apart from his disciples to pray.¹ He could not share many of their petitions; and did not hesitate, as conscious of all power, to say to them, Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name that will I do. If Jesus be an incarnation not of God, but of the attributes of God; and if he specially reveals only one group of divine attributes; and if his revelation of God be so indirect and impersonal that we dare not have him before our faith as an object of worship, it is very plain that the new piety cannot sing the songs of the old, and our great books of devotion must be rewritten.

One other side of the picture of Christ's life should be noticed; that is, the eschatological. The Jesus of the New Testament and the life of the church make prominent the future of the people of God. Not so the new theology. It practically says, Do your duty here and now, and all will be well hereafter. A glance at a work like Kaftan's *Dogmatik* shows how the "last things" have become the lost things in this school. The revealing life of Jesus is still further limited to begin with his baptism and close with his crucifixion. What lie beyond these are presuppositions or inferences, which are of no value as doctrines of faith. Ritschl finds hope to be a blessing only for a few select Christians, but not for the ordinary believer.² These "characterful Christians," who, for the good of the mass of mankind, did not dwell apart on earth, may expect special glory in the life to come. But, he adds, even for such advanced Christians, hope is not to be made a part of devotion here. Herrmann's whole work on the religious life finds no place for Christ's teachings about the rewards of heaven for the righteous, the punishment of the wicked, the coming again of the Lord, the final judgment, the resurrection, and participation of the saints in the glory

¹ Cf. Forrest, *The Christ of History and of Experience*, 1899, p. 22.

² *Unterricht*, S. 67.

of Christ. He is shut out from all beyond the death of Jesus, because the resurrection is an event of history, and faith cannot rest on events of history. Yet it is hard to see how we can rest our soul's salvation upon the overwhelming impression which we receive of the love of God in the inner life of Jesus, when the evangelists describe the part of his life before the crucifixion, and why we dare not rest a single hope upon a similar overwhelming impression of the same love when the same evangelists describe the glorious and triumphant part of his life that followed the resurrection.

Giving up the resurrection, Herrmann finds two reasons for thinking that Jesus did not perish on the cross: the first is, that "we cannot think of the personal life of Jesus as something that could ever be given over to annihilation" (p. 222); the second is, that, as God undertook to make Jesus perfect, we must believe that he "lives now, perfected and freed from all earthly limits." But, he adds, "we cannot speak of a communion with the exalted Christ." What a great gap this exclusion of all eschatological motives makes in apostolical and all subsequent devotion is very evident. The picture of Jesus presented by the new theology is too small and too indistinct. It makes him only a marvelous prophet transfigured with the love of God; but not the Saviour of the world. It is unreasonable as well as unhistorical to isolate Jesus from past and future. It is his connection with the Old Testament in the past and with the apostolic preaching after him that puts him in the true light for both thought and piety, namely, as the center of the history of mankind. Only the larger picture of the greater Christ, the preëxistent, the transcendent, corresponds to the noblest devotion of the Christian. This devotion includes the joy that arises from guilt removed; the assurance of faith which springs from seeing Jesus dying for our sins and rising again for

our justification; the sweet peace that starts from beholding justice satisfied in Christ; the bright hope that is born of the promises of the Lord; the constant conviction that we are in abiding communion with Christ as Mediator and King of the church, who wields creative and providential power and wisdom in the world and in human history for the good of his people; and finally, the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, as the very breath of God, making the Word of God articulate in all our life.

We may conclude this part of the subject by going back to the common definition of Christianity with which we began. It is "a communion of the soul with the living God through the mediation of Christ." Here certainly is the place where every assurance should be given to faith. The decisive question is, How do I become partaker of the mediation of Christ? The Lord said, Come unto me; that is the way to be saved. He also said, Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them; that is the way of devotion and holy discipline in the church. How, then, can we come to him? And, how can we have him in the midst of us? Most Christians think that they find Christ present in all gatherings of believers; and when an unconverted man enters their meeting inquiring how to be saved, they do not hesitate to bid him ask Jesus then and there for pardon and peace, just as the blind man or Paul on the way to Damascus did. Thousands have found the Lord in this way and led lives of great Christian usefulness in proof of their fellowship with Christ. But the new theology declares this is not the way of its Christian experience. Herrmann says: "Only mature faith can grasp the idea of the exalted Christ working upon us" (p. 224). Most believers know little of it, and in any case men cannot be converted by leaping towards a transcendent Christ. What, then, is the inquirer to do? He is to look back earnestly to the "picture" of the his-

toric Christ. He is to look till he catches the spirit of Jesus and becomes a child of God. But to many people such an exhortation seems as useless as telling the lame man at the Beautiful Gate of the temple to look at it and admire it till it swings open, and he will be able to leap into it, praising God. Herrmann admits that this seeking union with God by looking at a "vision" of Jesus "is the hardest part to grasp in the whole sum of the historic reality of Jesus." To us it seems impossible. It is especially serious that the most difficult thing to explain is conversion. How can the soul dead in trespasses and sins reach the living God through Jesus, who died under Pontius Pilate and, for aught we know, never left the tomb of Joseph? What will bridge this sea of death? Herrmann tries to make Jesus alive by saying that he is present, not only as a picture, but especially is he here in giving testimony respecting himself. He ever impresses us with himself and the communion with God which he brings. But here the anchor is again in the sand, and we drift. We are in the whirlpool of "judgments of value." In other words, in devotion and the needs of the soul Christ is divine, and can cross the ages to be present as Saviour and Lord; but in the cold light of reason and criticism he is only a man. Kaftan also says that all preaching must show salvation to rest upon the Divinity of Christ. But by the Divine Christ he means the man Jesus who preached for three years "that God in Christ reveals to us the highest blessings of his kingdom, and calls us to enter it" by "repentance and faith." This man, freed from earthly limitation and entered into the heavenly life, is now the Divine Christ.

Herrmann objects to the current conception of Christ as the ascended Lord, that it makes Jesus only the indispensable means of reaching God; and when God is reached Jesus is left behind as no longer necessary. In other

words, in gaining the Divine Christ we lose the historic Christ. Now, instead of that being a valid objection, it seems, from the experience of most Christians, to be simply a description of what takes place. Devout monks in the Middle Ages taught, as the path of piety, first the *Imitatio Jesu*, a following him in fasting, in watching, in poverty, in all lowly service; then they taught the *Imitatio Christi*, the lifting up of the soul, by meditation and prayer, till, like John on Patmos, they caught the spirit and shared the life of the King of glory. We all move in our experience from the Jesus of humiliation to the Christ of exaltation. Herrmann says that in our communion with God we ever find Christ to be "the living One"; that is true, but it is only the believer in the actual, essential divinity of Christ who can keep him as the living One through all his life. It is the historic Christ, with only the religious value of God, that is left behind when we enter the presence of the Absolute God. In our loftiest devotion the exalted Christ appears as the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person; and it is because Father and Son are inseparable in worship, that we rise from the Jesus of the earth to adore the Lord in heaven. The new theology puts the mystery of faith in the problem of how the sinner is to reach God by passing back across nineteen centuries to get an impression of the love of God in the three years' ministry of Jesus. The old theology leaves the mystery, where the church has long left it, in the eternal and essential relationship of the Father and the Son. By rejecting all communion with God, except through the historic Christ, and then making the historic Christ only attributively, locally, and temporally Divine, it might well be urged that the inquiring spirit is cut off from all approach to God. Destructive historic criticism might declare the inner life of Jesus to be as unhistoric as all else, and philosophical criticism

might pronounce the ideal Christ, constructed from this unhistoric material, but a creation of the fond imagination of men brought up in the church, and taught the New Testament from infancy.

Thus it looks as if the anti-mystical school might fall a prey to subjectivity and ultimately become agnostic. Certain it is that the Christology of men like Harnack, Herrmann, and Kaftan runs serious danger of losing the Divine Christ in exclusively honoring the historic Christ. Ritschl had much sympathy with Socinianism; and it is not easy to see how the views of Herrmann or Kaftan respecting Jesus' being taken up into the sphere of the Divine, differ from Socinianism. Now the history of devotion, from the days of the Monarchians down, shows that with the Divine Redeemer true piety and life leave the church. Where are the Ebionites and Monarchians, and Arians and Adoptionists, and Sabellians and Socinians, and Unitarians of whatever name? Dead, declining, dying, decaying, passing away. These parties often stood for higher learning and finer culture than were found in the orthodox church; but their learning instructed only an ethical society, and their culture but polished natural virtues. They had no defense against the gates of hell, and were overthrown. But men holding a Divine Christ as supreme object of devotion, even though they fell into the superstitions of Greek and Roman Catholicism, had the power of an endless life within them, and survived. It is not too much to say that Catholicism with all its errors, holding the Divine Lord, will continue to say mass over the graves of dying and dead forms of Unitarianism. And the Church Catholic of the last times will sing in solemn chorus the one *Te Deum* of all the ages, whose throbbing heart is, "Thou art the King of glory, O Christ."

MODERN THEOLOGY AND CHRISTIAN SERVICE.

All Christians are agreed that the followers of Jesus are the salt of the earth and the light of the world. The salt that has not lost its savor keeps on penetrating and purifying the material about it; and the light that is not obscured or put out continues to pierce with its guiding rays the surrounding darkness. We believe that Christianity is, as no other religion, in its very nature missionary; and every man who has free communion with God through Jesus Christ will strive to preach the gospel to every creature. There was one pre-Christian religion, Buddhism, that became missionary, and, entering China, Japan, and Thibet, converted them largely to the gentle faith of Buddha. But this system is dead and buried in India; and elsewhere it has long ago ceased to be missionary. There was also one post-Christian religion that became missionary, namely Mohammedanism. But scholars seem now agreed that all the missionary elements in Islam came from Old Testament predictions and New Testament fulfilments and realizations of the claims of Jehovah to rule over all men. Dante was not wrong in putting Mohammed among the heretics in the Inferno. Christianity thus remains unique as the one characteristic missionary religion, and the Christian stands forth as the one religious man who cannot be a theologian without piety, and who cannot have piety without being in spirit and efforts a missionary. Where the most earnest and intelligent Christian activity shows itself, there, we conclude, is the fullest and best apprehension of the gospel of Christ.

Of course men do not fully agree as to what constitutes Christian work. Liberal theologians, such as the Unitarian teachers, when told that more than half the Unitarians of America are still in Massachusetts; and that in seventy years their churches, professing "the divineness

of sanctified humanity," have grown only from 193 to 421, reply that much of their mission has been done in spreading liberal thought through all the churches. Be that as it may, the question now before us is as to the practical activity which springs from this liberal thought. What does a man do for God and humanity when inspired by such thought? What is his message to men? Harnack says he should preach: "I believe in God, who forgives sins, and I commit myself into his hands." He says that is true Judaism as well as the Christianity of Jesus.¹ On that basis some Unitarian leaders coöperate with Jewish rabbis as part of their mission, to show that the unity of God and the brotherhood of man is religion. The "Parliament of Religions" in Chicago was a kind of Pentecost for many liberal theologians at which Comparative Religion was the gospel, and the conscience of every man the Holy Spirit. Where, then, no doctrinal tests are set up, Martineau says² the mission of liberal Christians is to help produce "righteousness of life and the graces of the Christian mind." But how is this to be done by the liberal church? Looking for a reply leads us into the indefiniteness of action which we have already noticed in the field of theology. Dr. Carroll³ thinks the non-evangelical churches of America have led the evangelical churches to take more interest in purely humanitarian work. In other words, rationalism is a matter of education, culture, and the indirect methods of "settlement work" in cities, and lecture courses in the country, rather than of direct religious revival. It is a sentimental service of turning daylight into sunlight, a movement for ethical culture, making men partly good better; but it is not a work of awful convic-

¹ *Die Christliche Welt*, 1899, No. 4.

² Allen, *Hist. of Unitarians*, in *American Church Hist. Series*, 1894, p. 247.

³ *Relig. Forces of the United States* (same series, 1893), p. lvi.

tion, a seeking and saving the lost. It does not even stir the purses of men. It has been remarked recently that the Congregational churches of one town in New England gave more money for benevolent purposes than did all the 420 Unitarian churches in America. Neither does the heathen world lie heavy upon the hearts of those liberal believers. The reason is obvious. The heathen are not lost; they are but in a lower stage of development, and perhaps they cannot be elevated at once. Their own religion may best suit their present condition. They have already a dim hold upon the fundamentals of religion; and only through slow educational and civilizing stages can they rise to the Christian level. Hence we are not surprised to learn that sending one missionary to India, on "a fund of moderate amount given for such use," was for American Unitarianism, "a new departure into a field doubtful and unexplored."¹ This missionary, Mr. Dall, died in 1886. His labors "were of no effect to gather a native church," and he had no successor. In 1887, Hon. H. Davis, visiting Asia, was impressed "by the seeming ineffectiveness of Christian missions founded on dogma"; this led to the organization of a Unitarian school of theology in Japan, with three native teachers and three "sustained from the United States." We shall watch with interest the progress of this undogmatic mission work.

The liberal theology of Germany has had similar intangible relations to mission activity. It is a simple historic fact, which cannot be explained away, and over which radical preachers grow irritable, as if the result of conspiracy, that the active management of all city missions, home missions, foreign missions, and missions to the Jews is in the hands of the orthodox and the Pietists. The new theology, whether of the *Protestantenverein* or of the Ritschlian school, does not seem able to get hold of the sub-

¹ Allen, *l. c.*, p. 238.

merged mankind at home or abroad. And this lack of grasp of men seems to correspond, as already noticed, to a certain lack of grasp in the new theology. It everywhere makes religion a matter of indirect relation to God, through the church. The obstacle in man's way is the world, not sin. There is no wrath of God to preach here and now, as impending, no urging man to flee from it. Ritschl taught that the idea of God's wrath is an Old Testament conception, and is not involved in our redemption, because God ever foresaw the redeemed as in his kingdom. Thus in the face of the Scriptures to the contrary (cf. Rom. i. 18), and of our Christian experience, which speaks of our real guilt and God's real displeasure, also of the happy change in us corresponding to the change in God when his anger was turned away and he had mercy upon us, the new theology tells us there is nothing in God's revelation to us but love. The change in God is only apparent; there is a dualism here, of course; between our experience and Ritschl's theology, but, by means of the "judgments of value," all is made plain. The wrath of God, it is held, looks to the future; and seems to signify that those who do not come into life relations to God through Jesus will be annihilated. No anger of God against the sinner now, and annihilation of the impenitent hereafter; that is surely not a good doctrine for evangelistic work. Yet, strange to say, it is this theology that leads the van with the cry "Back to Christ." It makes the only way to God through the historic Christ; and then leaves the heathen, apparently, who know not the historic Christ, to annihilation.

The orthodox Pietist, who is so active in foreign missionary work, often cherishes the hope that the ever-present Christ, the Divine Logos, whom early Christians, from Justin down, called the "seminal reason" in the universe, reaches unconsciously some in the heathen world, who, as Peter said, fear God and work righteousness, and unites

them to Christ. But the new theology, which seems less hopeful for the unevangelized heathen than its orthodox brother, has not yet roused itself to world evangelization. It everywhere works by indirection. One of the fertile thoughts borrowed by Ritschl from Schleiermacher was that of a man's daily calling (*Beruf*) as the sphere of his religion. The honest merchant, the loyal soldier, the faithful tent-maker, were in the first place of Christian service. He did not hesitate to call Zinzendorf dishonest for occasionally leaving his government office to engage in revival services. He had a perfect horror of Pietism, and the key to his practical teachings is to be found in his hatred of this movement. He regarded it as the chief danger to the evangelical church of Germany.¹ He rejected Pietists and their doctrine of original sin. He rejected their revivalism and their doctrine of regeneration by the personal work of the Holy Spirit. He abhorred their preaching the risen and glorified Christ, and denounced their doctrine of expiation and sacrifice in the atonement. He utterly opposed, also, the preaching of a hell to be shunned, and a heaven to be gained, as motives to entering on a religious life. The way to promote religion, he held, is to elevate the church as representative of God's kingdom, and thereby lift up humanity. But he would not hear of attempts at individual conversion in the church; and discipline should not be exercised on individuals, but aimed at the purification of the whole religious body. Hence, outside this general work within the body of Christians, the chief activity of those who follow these views appears in efforts at social and national reform. The "Evangelical Social Congress" of Germany is chiefly supported by such theologians as Harnack, Kaftan, and Gregory, who are more or less in sympathy with these indirect modes of evangelization. It is especially urged that only

¹ *Leben*, II, S. 473.

such general application of religion is compatible with art, culture, literature, and national progress.

Now, that our presentation of the gospel should not conflict with true culture, every intelligent Christian must readily admit. We all believe that, in part, religion may be an outgrowth of right home life and national culture. The place of Christian nurture has been long recognized in America. It was known and prized by the Pilgrim Fathers. There is no conflict, however, between the sweet constraint of a Christian home, leading to conversion, and open appeals to decide for God in revival meetings. Ritschl admits that he knew nothing from personal experience of the Pietist prayer-meetings, which he so bitterly denounced. Those who know both Christian nurture and wholesome revivals never see the chasm between them which the great theologian imagined. The two methods look at different classes of people usually ; and often alternate in the history of religious life. On the other hand, men who, through sociological considerations, give up entirely evangelistic work, in order to reform men by social amelioration, do not seem to move towards the place of greater power. Mr. B. Fay Mills as revivalist and Bible reader seemed to be a greater force for righteousness than Mr. Mills the lecturer on social reform. Dr. Stöcker, the leader of Christian Reform movements in Germany, declares that social work and personal evangelization must be kept united, otherwise both will suffer. Only a converted individual can form the unit of a regenerated society. Experience, too, abundantly shows that the work of men like Wesley, Harms, Finney, Franke, Petri, Monod, whatever their name or nation, led not only to deep and wide revivals of religion, but also to reforms of manners and general elevation of the people.

We strike here the weakest spot, the place of almost fatal weakness, in the practical outlook of the Ritschlian

theology. The older rationalism passed coldly by such movements as Pietism. The mediating school, that followed Schleiermacher, ever tried to combine his speculative theology with his affection for the Moravian type of devotion. But Ritschl was so biased against emotionalism in religion, that he could never recognize the great revival of religion that followed the Napoleonic wars in Germany and led up to the best Christian life in the present empire. He becomes color-blind to virtue itself when exhibited by a Pietist. Such a one was full of "æsthetic excitement" and "zeal for home and foreign missions." He could even say that Moravians had little "honest esteem for secular duties." But Eike shows, by abundant illustrations, that "almost all the larger national churches of Germany have in the course of this century enjoyed the blessed influence of a noble and effective Pietism" (p. 31). It is gratifying, also, to observe that some of the prominent representatives of this theology have abandoned this extreme position. Kaftan held, against the opposition of Ritschl, that the heart of Christianity is to have one's life hidden with Christ in God. Both he and Häring, also Reischle, defend prayer to the exalted Christ.¹ Others, like Wendt, lay more stress upon the death of Christ in his work of redemption. But there is still much ground to be traversed before, from the side of Providence and daily duty, this school reaches the same high vantage-ground in missions attained, by way of prayer, study of the Scriptures, and love of the Divine Christ, among the more emotional believers.

When we glance at the field of foreign missions, the contrast in the work of the German church is about as great as that between the foreign missions of American Unitarians and those of the American Board. Of course we are reminded that orthodox missions are over a century old, while those of the liberal theology began very recently.

¹ See the references in Eike, *l. c.*, p. 75 f.

And yet this very lateness of entrance into the wide field of greatest need might be a subject for explanation. The further fact that orthodox missions started in the persistent, importunate prayers of a few godly men and had their cradle in conventicles, a thing not favored by the new teachings, is significant. Pastor Harms prayed to God nearly all night till he felt that his congregation in Hermannsburg must become a missionary society and send the gospel to the heathen. Within forty years his parish of poor farmers and artisans sent out over three hundred and fifty missionaries, and built a ship for their use in working among their 14,000 converts from paganism. A group of free, congregational, converted Scandinavian churches in America, whose members are of the lower middle classes, have combined their prayer-meetings for gospel extension, and raised last year for foreign missions \$22,000. The year before they sent fifty of their members to work in China alone. Radical and mediating theologians and pastors, thirteen years ago, in Germany felt, as did Hon. H. Davis, that the nations of culture—India, China, and Japan—could be better reached by the liberal theology and comparative religion than by the teachings of “dogmatic” missionaries. So the “General Evangelical-Protestant Mission Union” was formed and the *Zeitschrift für Missionskunde und Religionswissenschaft* started as its organ. We have read the *Zeitschrift* from the beginning, and been much interested in this first attempt of the liberal theology to carry on foreign missions. Professor Mirbt has recently called Pietism, which is the religion of most English-speaking Protestants, “the tree whose fruits are missions.”¹ We all know how the Pietism of Halle was the source of German missions at home and abroad.

How, then, does the new mission method succeed as compared with the old? In China the Union took, as its

¹ *Allgem. Miss. Zeitschrift*, April, 1899.

first missionary, Dr. Faber, a very learned man, who had gone out in the service of the old Society, but severed the connection to give himself to literary labors. His Christian edition of the Chinese classics is a work of great value to all missionaries. A second missionary has been sent to China, since the German occupation there, to preach to the Germans and also work among the Chinese. This twofold work is also carried on in Japan, the other field of the Union. About half the time of the three or four missionaries here is given to work for Germans; and the chief efforts made to reach the Japanese are by means of schools and a theological seminary. The annual report of 1897 says two native churches have been organized in Japan with about 88 members. There are 158 children in schools and five students in the theological seminary. The annual income of the Union was \$12,000. Dr. Arndt, the President, in his Report most decidedly opposes, however, the view, with which many entered the Union, that the liberal theology would win the races of culture to the gospel more quickly than the preaching of the older missionaries. He says: "We must by no means conceal from ourselves that the prevalent opinion that representatives of a free theology will find it easier to carry on mission work than others is all wrong; the opposite is the case, and we wish this to be carefully laid to heart in Germany. It is rather much more difficult for a liberal theologian to place a young Japanese, led about by all modern theories, upon a solid foundation for faith, because he must demand of the inquirer much more personal effort and self-reliance in winning and maintaining his position, than those do who can plant him upon a solid external authority, whether of church, office, dogma, inspired Scriptures, or even the uncritical acceptance and use of New Testament faith and practice."

In other points, also, we notice changes of opinion,

and on the mission field the great trial for the survival of the fittest will go on. Herrmann says the orthodox theory of the atonement cannot convert men; but a dying negro whispered to a missionary: "Oh, Jesus die, me no die." Substitution was his gospel. After a century of labor, the old societies have at work 6500 white men, 4000 white women, not wives of missionaries, 6800 native helpers, and 2,000,000 converts. They have \$15,000,000 annual income for the most diversified forms of work. When other presentations of Christianity as the world religion have overtaken the work and success of the laborers long in the field, then we will be in a position, as we are not perhaps now, to apply the test, By their fruits ye shall know them. As in the domain of theology the doctrine of the Divine Christ and devotion to him seems to be the "article of a standing or a falling church," so in the field of obedience and life the doctrine of missions at home and abroad appears to be the mark of a living or dying church.