

Faut's criticisms of Thomasius and Gess may be quite valid; but he fails to notice that the basal idea which they were trying to get expressed has roots—a good many of them—in the New Testament itself. It is not uncommon to depreciate the Kenotic conception as mythology; but as long as the Christian mind is convinced of two things, that Christ lived in the Godhead before He was born at Bethlehem, and that His life after Bethlehem was genuinely human, so long Kenoticism, as a general hypothesis, will keep its influence, and will deserve to keep it.

Faut's independent statement is coloured, more rather than less, by a tendency to simple theological positivism. These are the facts, he would say, as to what faith actually feels Christ to be, but no theory of them can be given; and that which is impossible cannot be necessary. What Christ must always mean to the believing consciousness he sees clearly enough, and states it unambiguously. 'As the ground of our salvation, He is the object of our faith; we believe in Him, not as we believe in a man or a prophet, but as we believe in God.' Yet on the next page he declines to follow Kaftan in affirming, *doctrinally*, the divinity of Christ. That, he fears, would make the historic Jesus unintelligible, and might impair the truth of monotheism. One may suggest that if faith speaks thus unequivocally as to Christ's true place, we must even take our courage in both hands and insist on Dogmatic making room for what faith has to say. H. R. MACKINTOSH.

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### A Moravian Teacher of the New School.<sup>1</sup>

NOT the least remarkable feature in this remarkable work is that it comes from a tutor in a Moravian theological seminary. It is written on Ritschlian lines, although that name does not occur in the work. The centring of God's revelation of Himself to man in the person of Jesus, which is the thesis of the book, is a fundamental principle of the Ritschlian school. Herr Steinmann's treatise is one of remarkable originality and strength. Its negative and positive sides alike are reasoned out

<sup>1</sup> *Die geistige Offenbarung Gottes in der geschichtlichen Person Jesu.* Von Th. Steinmann, Docent am Theol. Seminar in Gnadenfeld. Göttingen. 3s. 9d.

with unflinching consistency and compressed force. However much we may disagree with the argument as a whole, we must admire its great earnestness, its clearness of thought, and, above all, its positive aim. The negative part, which is, of course, implied in the main thesis, is brief, and is only preliminary to the exposition of the writer's own faith, which is given at length. The author knows what and why he believes.

At the outset, it is startling to find that the writer refers only to modern authorities on the negative side of New Testament criticism, from J. Weiss to Wernle. Their positions seem to be admitted without question. The reason, no doubt, is that they support the negative part of the writer's argument. Still, we were not prepared for such complete acquiescence in negative criticism in a Moravian circle. Whether all the critics would agree with the positive side of the argument is not clear. Herr Steinmann evidently believes that J. Weiss would not. At least he finds that his theory and Professor Weiss' position do not harmonize.

In the first place, the author insists, in the plainest terms, that the element of mystery and miracle is essential to religion, because religion begins with the intervening of a higher, spiritual world in the present life, and such intervention is revelation. 'Miracle is essential to religion, because it is nothing else than the manifestation of the other world in the present world; and this we may call revelation, for revelation just means that what belongs to that world is made known to this.' The negative part of the argument is the contention that this element of miracle and revelation cannot consist in anything external. Evidence consisting in external miracle would need to be demonstrated by conclusive historical and logical proof, and no such proof is forthcoming. This is asserted in relation both to Old Testament prophecy and the teaching of Jesus Himself. It is argued that it cannot be proved beyond possibility of doubt that these might not have their origin in natural causes. We must say that the author here rather asserts than proves his case. He also minimizes the strength of the evidence, and assumes that without demonstration faith is out of the question; anything short of absolute certainty is no certainty.

True miracle, it is argued, appeals to the heart, not to the intellect. It is something felt, in-

stinctively experienced, having nothing to do with intellectual, historical proof—truly a revolutionary suggestion. The other view, which includes both elements, it seems, has been the grand mistake of ordinary faith and apologetics all along. The miracle and revelation which have just been declared essential to the very existence of religion are exclusively spiritual, spiritual being so defined as to exclude the work of intelligence and reason. Ordinary miracles are mechanical, scholastic. The Christian miracle is purely spiritual, to feeling, not to reason. That it is inexplicable is no difficulty. Dogmas may be explained, not feelings. There follows next a very able and interesting outline of a philosophy of religion, although, after what has been stated, a philosophy of religion is the last thing we should expect. The upward trend of religion is traced from the lowest stage of the terrible and sensuous, through the material and legal, to the simple, spiritual, inward conception of the nature of religion, the highest type of which is to be found in Christianity as the religion of the spirit.

The positive application of these premisses is worked out with great acuteness. The title, 'The Spiritual Revealing of God in the Historical Jesus,' is expounded and defended in detail. This is the only Christian miracle, and it is repeated to every individual believer. 'God did not speak once in the sense that He never spoke before or since. His revealing work is a constantly living process.' This Divine self-revelation is the unique point in the case. It is matter of experience and is the result of contact with the personal Christ in the Gospels. Whether everything in the Gospels is historical or not, there is always enough to work this miracle. The effect needs no attestation, it is its own witness. The effect is further defined as the communication of the very spirit of Jesus to us; His piety becomes ours. The new life is transferred to us by a sort of 'contagion'; indeed, this very power of contagion itself is communicated to us. There is something analogous to this in the influence of others upon us; we are passive recipients of the influence. Thus Jesus is much more than a pattern to us. In His presence 'we feel ourselves drawn near to God, His oneness with God flowing into us. And so God draws near to us. From no other cause than because His personality, which influences us, is that of the man who abides in God is our experience of Him

a Divine message to us.' 'This man abiding in God first transfers His nature to others, who come into inner contact with Him. They do not first take Him for a pattern and then effect in themselves what corresponds to this pattern; but His nature is able to penetrate, so to speak, into them, and act on them as the blue sky and sunshine act on one. Whoever meets this man abiding in God does not merely make new resolves, but first of all and chiefly has a new experience.' Much of the teaching reminds one of Herrmann's *Communion with God*. 'Every individual must here strive to see the thing itself on which all depends with his own clear eyes.' We thus see that on the theory proposed, revelation is concentrated on the individual being brought into touch with Christ. Scripture, and especially the image of Christ in Scripture, are only the vehicle of revelation. Still the stress thrown on Scripture is very great. 'We have now a clear picture of what revelation means in the stage of spiritual religion. It is an inner experience of the good man, which presents itself wherever the Christ-nature grows and is cherished in him; this is always a self-revelation of God to him.'

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### M. Lepin on the Fourth Gospel.<sup>1</sup>

THE interest of this lucid and well-arranged volume is rather discounted by two considerations. In the first place, the external evidence has been so thoroughly examined, from the conservative side, by Dr. James Drummond and Canon Sanday, that the larger part of this French study has little or nothing that is new to English students of the problem, except a wealth of welcome references to modern critical essays on the subject. In the second place, the volume does not reach the questions of historicity and inner truth. These are reserved for a sequel, which, one hopes, will follow before long. But, disregarding these drawbacks, the reader will find M. Lepin a thoroughly fair and well-informed champion of the conservative school, abreast of the latest movements, especially in his own country, and uncompromising upon the smallest jot and tittle of the Fourth Gospel. Hesitation he knows not. Concessions he will

<sup>1</sup> *L'Origine du Quatrième Évangile*. Par M. Lepin. Paris: Letouzey et Ané, Éditeurs. 1907. Pp. xii, 508.

not entertain. Phrases like 'I venture to think,' or 'the probability is,' or 'it seems upon the whole likely,' are wholly absent from his pages. One after another, the opinions unfavourable to his thesis are marshalled, examined, and sentenced with an equable confidence, which only breaks into some irony of personal feeling when M. Loisy happens to be the culprit. The reasons for his respective judgments have all been heard before. M. Lepin has certainly written a clear and full handbook upon the external evidence in the main, but on few points has he much original thought to bring forward. His positive contributions seldom advance beyond what one is accustomed to in essays written from his standpoint.

After discussing the general Johannine problem, with especial reference to Loisy (chap. i.), the author devotes his second chapter to a proof that the Gospel was composed at Ephesus and circulated late in the first century (pp. 19-72). To this conclusion one need not seriously demur, though the *terminus ad quem* might be placed a decade later, without doing violence to the relevant evidence. The rest of the book then follows the conventional order of topics. Chap. iii. proves that the Apostle John resided in Ephesus till his death at an advanced age. Chap. iv. defends the tradition which associates the Fourth Gospel with him; chap. v., again, shows that the Apocalypse, the Gospel, and the three Epistles were all written by the same hand; while chap. vi. concludes that

the internal evidence of the Gospel itself points to John not only as the beloved disciple, but as the author of the entire work (including even v.<sup>24</sup> of the last chapter). The argument seldom goes into much detail, except in chap. vi. As a rule, M. Lepin proves his point by general considerations, buttressed by a careful summary of critical opinion. His work is rather useful in this respect. It shows wide reading, conscientious labour, and a desire to omit no item of the evidence. But, I confess, it leaves one as it found one. Like several other apologetic volumes, it reminds one of Dr. Rochecliffe's *Malleus Hæresis*, which 'was considered as a knockdown blow by all except those who received it.'

JAMES MOFFATT.

*Broughty Ferry.*

### Kirn's Dogmatics.<sup>1</sup>

THE first edition of this work was reviewed in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES (vol. xvi. p. 515), and it is not necessary to add anything to the notice already given. It is a good sign, both for the book and for the study of Dogmatics, that it is already in a second edition. It deserves the success which it has won.

<sup>1</sup> *Grundriss der Evangelischen Dogmatik.* Von D. Otto Kirn, Professor der Theologie in Leipzig. Zweite Durchgesehene Auflage. Leipzig: A. Deichert'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung. Price M.2.20.

## Social Theories and the Teaching of Jesus.

BY THE REV. D. MACFADYEN, M.A., HIGHGATE, LONDON.

### II.

#### What is Christian Socialism?

DEFINITION is the first duty of any one who uses the word 'Socialism.' It is a very chameleon among words, and takes its colour from the circumstances in which it finds itself. Its many meanings are not made fewer by prefixing the epithet 'Christian.' There can be neither agreement nor argument until the fluctuating connotation of the terms has been exchanged for a fixed value.

Benjamin Kidd has used the word 'Socialism' to cover 'all attempts towards the improvement of society by society.' This is a more generous and inclusive definition than could be accepted by some of the straightest of the sect of socialists. But we are seldom able to accept the definition of a movement by its straightest sect. The definition is a convenient one, and suggests further a specific sense which may be given to the term 'Christian