

miracle-worker. "Thy sins are forgiven," was a revelation of paramount importance. There is no question of deeper importance than that asked by Job, "How can man be just with God?" Christ told the way. It was a truth for all time, and of such tremendous moment to the well being of humanity that suddenly, in the midst of ordinary events, a divine hand appeared and wrote in letters of shining grace, "This claim is true; Christ is able to save the world." Whenever you see a miracle, search for the accompanying truth. If what you see certifies to no grand revelation worthy of God, it is no miracle.

Just here the Evangelist Mark brings in an account of Christ's presence at the feast given by Matthew to show us

CHRIST'S PURPOSE TO SAVE THE SINNER.

It is not enough to know that Christ is able to save. Is He also willing to save? What is His purpose in coming to earth? This is a paramount question. It was answered by a surprising incident. Matthew Levi was a tax-gatherer, belonging to a hated class,—a class which of necessity, from its hateful duties and its great temptations, drew to it men of the meanest character and lowest position. The Romans themselves despised these officials, terming them "the wolves and bears of society," and their work "the basest of all livelihoods." Still bitterer was the feeling against them among the Jews. They were not allowed to contribute alms in the synagogues or to give testimony. They were an ostracised class. And yet Christ called Matthew to be His disciple, and when Matthew gave a farewell feast to his fellow-publicans, Christ allowed Himself to take a place among them and eat with them. He could hardly have done anything more shocking to high-bred Jews. It was an act amazingly impolitic. What did it mean? It was evidently done designedly. It was to show that Christ came to earth "to seek and to save that which was lost." "They that are whole," said Jesus, "have no need of a physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." Christ's mission is remedial, and Christianity is a remedial system. In this it is distinguished from all other religions of the earth. It recognizes man as sick unto death with the spiritual disease we call sin. He needs healing and he cannot heal himself. Christ's one purpose in coming to earth was to seek out these poor, sin-sick mortals and save them. Wherever a sinner is, there Christ has a mission. Whoever is a sinner may know that Christ is seeking him. Christ loves him, Christ died for him, would save him. And if this is Christ's mission, it should be that of every one of His followers. We are sent to the sin-stricken of every race and condition. Their very unworthiness, even their loathsomeness, is the ground of their claim upon us. They are sick unto death, and we, as disciples of the great Physician, are bound to give them healing if we can.

Queen's University.

FEBRUARY CONFERENCE OF THE THEOLOGICAL ALUMNI.

The Alumni who initiated these Conferences at Queen's are gratified at their success, and at the fact that they are being imitated in one form or another by sister institutions. This year's Conference promises to be particularly helpful, though one highly esteemed brother, who undertook last February to prepare a paper, the Rev. D. J. Macdonnell, will be unable to be present. It commences on Feb. 11th, at 7.30 p.m. Persons, intending to be present and desiring to be billeted, must apply to the Secretary, Rev. J. D. Boyd, B.A., Kingston, before Feb. 7th. Accommodation will not be provided for those who apply later.

The following is the programme for this winter:

FORENOONS.

I. "The Chancellor's Lectureship." Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion of Kant and Hegel are postponed till next session, and, in their place, Professor Watson proposes to give a critical estimate of A. J. Balfour's "Foundations of Belief," a work which has excited a good deal of comment. It is requested that those who propose to attend this session will make themselves familiar with the substance of Mr. Balfour's book.

II. (a) "Present Day Problems of Canadian Preaching." Discussions opened by the Principal.

Book recommended to be read: Sanday on Inspiration (Bampton Lectures for 1893).

Papers to be written and sent in by Rev. D. J. Macdonnell, B.D., and Rev. James Bennett, B.A.

(b) Other Present Day Problems of Ministerial Work. Papers are invited on this subject, to be sent to the Principal by Feb. 1st.

AFTERNOONS.

I. Sociology and Economics (under the guidance of Professor Shortt). (a) General view of Socialistic Schemes (J. Rae). Paper by Rev. John Hay, B.D.

(b) Introduction to the Modern Industrial System (A. Toynbee.) Paper by Rev. Salem Bland, B.A.

(c) Problems of Poverty (Hobson). Paper by Rev. John J. Wright, B.A.

(d) Problems of To-day (R. T. Ely). Paper by Rev. M. MacGillivray, M.A.

The following are also suggested: General Principles of Economics (J. L. Laughlin); Modern Political Society (F. O. Montague, P. Leroy-Beaulieu); Development of the Labor Problem (L. Brontano); Money and the Mechanism of Exchange (P. W. Jevons); Monopolies and the People (C. W. Baker); Social Diseases and Worse Remedies (T. E. Huxley).

II. "Social Reunions of the Members of the Conference, with visits to the Library, the Museum, and the new Laboratories.

EVENINGS.

The Old Testament Conception of God. Rev. Dr. G. M. Milligan.

Influence of Rome on Christianity. Rev. J. A. Sinclair, M.A.

Influence of Greece on Christianity. Professor McNaughton.

The Apologetic for the Times. Professor Ross.

The Present Position of Old Testament Historical Criticism. Professor Mowat.

Looks into Books.

A CRITICAL AND EXEGETICAL COMMENTARY on the Epistle to the Romans, by the Rev. William Sanday, D.D., LL.D., and the Rev. Arthur C. Headlam, B.D., Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1895.

This is the first New Testament volume in the International Critical Commentary as Driver's Deuteronomy was the first on the Old Testament. And whatever one may think as to the critical views of those who projected the series there is no question as to transcendent value of this part of it.

Happily for themselves and for the permanent usefulness of their work the authors have here no occasion to differ widely from any portion of the traditional view as to the origin and character of the Epistle to the Romans. All attempts to shake confidence in its genuineness and even in its integrity have so far completely failed and it stands to-day more surely than ever as one of the universally accepted Pauline productions of the first century. The most thorough going scholarship has only confirmed the traditional view and put it beyond all doubt. The strength of the book, therefore, lies in the commentary itself. The Epistle is one which affords abundant opportunity for testing the Commentator's ability.

In one respect this Commentary makes no claim to be exhaustive. It does not catalogue and discuss all the various views that have been given by the multitude of scholars who have left works on this epistle. But at best that would have been only a useless parade of learning and one does not miss it. At almost every point, where it may prove helpful or even only interesting, the history of the leading lines of exegesis is given with sufficient fulness to enable one to see the trend of thought in the course of the centuries of exposition from the time of the father's down.

Nor do the writers aim at following out the theological aspects of the Apostle's teaching in such a way as to make a complete harmonious system. They recognize the permeating influence which a presupposed system is apt to have on the fidelity of exegesis. They carefully guard against putting more meaning into the language than it will fairly bear, whatever school of theology might benefit from it. They have aimed at making their exposition historical in the best sense, setting forth simply what the Apostle must have meant and what his original readers would be likely to understand.

The only presuppositions, therefore, which they are anxious to take account of are those of Paul himself. The Jewish literature of his day is abundantly drawn upon to discover the ideas that were current and with which he and his readers were likely to have been familiar. All that learning can do to put us in their situation is here done. The information is given too without any oracular assumption of superiority, but with the grounds fully stated so that each one can judge for himself as to the soundness of the positions taken. In fact the writers take us into their confidence all through and confess their own difficulties with a frankness that begets a strong feeling of security in the honesty and wisdom of their guidance. One of the fascinating features of the book is the readiness with which they interrupt the course of the verbal exegesis to discuss in a familiar and perfectly natural way the points of interest, whether textual, linguistic, doctrinal or historical that emerge from time to time. There are few questions one would care to ask about the epistle which are not dealt with in the appropriate place, while there are few of the discussions so purely academic that the average Biblical scholar is not likely to be interested in them. All the while the Apostles' main line of thought