

The Presbyterian Review.

Vol. X.—No. 4.

Toronto, August 3, 1893.

\$2.00 per annum.

The Revealer.

BY CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS.

Across the fog the moon lies fair,
Transfused with ghostly amethyst,
O white night, charm to wonderment
The cattle in the mist.

Thy touch, O grave mysteriarch,
Makes dull, familiar things divine.
Oh, grant of thy revealing gift
Be some small portion mine!

Make thou my vision sane and clear,
That I may see what beauty clings
To common forms, and find the soul
Of unregarded things!

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—Independent.

Problems of Protestant Germany.

BY PROF. G. H. SCHODDE, PH. D.

NO other country is so prolific as Germany in innovations, both good and bad, in the world of theological and religious thought. A number of causes contribute to this result. One of these causes is the fact that the Universities of the Fatherland, in which the historic ideal of "Academic Freedom" (*akademische Lehrfreiheit*) protects the instructor even in wildest vagaries, are the heart and centre of learned thought to an extent not dreamed of in England, France or America. Public sentiment over against University sentiment in the theological and philosophical isms of the hour either does not exist to a perceptible degree, or it is an exceedingly impotent factor. The protests of the Church at large asking that the university chair be filled with men who represent the historic faith of the Churches and do not undermine the fundamentals of the accepted creed, has practically been ignored by those in authority. As matters now stand the clergy and the Church have neither voice nor vote or veto in deciding who shall be the instructors of the future generations of pastors and preachers. This is solely the prerogative of the government acting through the *Cultus Ministerium*. It not infrequently happens, that the university of a province or a country in Germany theologically entirely misrepresents the people for whom they are to train spiritual shepherds. Thus for a decade and more the University of Gottingen has been practically under the control of the new rationalizing if not rationalistic school of Ritschl, although the province of Hanover is Lutheran to the core, and its pastors must at ordination vow allegiance to the symbolical books of the Lutheran Church.

One main reason for this breach and break between the research of the scholars and the historical and actual creed of the Church in Germany is to be found in the fact that there theology is a science, pure and simple, to be controlled and investigated according to the principles of all secular sciences and to be subject to the conditions of these. The personal faith or unfaith of the student is not regarded as a factor of decisive importance. Theology is not, as it was in the heroic days of Protestantism, a *habitus practicus*. As a consequence, it is not regarded as necessary that theology render handmaid services to the Church; it operates and investigates independently of her needs and status. That under these conditions, especially when taken in connection with the literary canon of Germany that scholarship consists only in the discovery of new paths and data,

the universities should be the source and fountain-head of an abundance of new theories and hypotheses, good, bad and indifferent, is not at all surprising. While the German ideal is certainly an exalted one, that of investigating truth for its own sake exclusively and irrespective of what the consequences may be, it is certain beyond any doubt that the Germans by no means live up to this ideal. The new schools even more than the old conservative clans are full of pro judgments. It is a notorious fact that the Ritschl school, built upon the foundation of the Kantian system; that the other radical school represented by such men as the late Professor Lipsius, of Jena, and Professor Pfleiderer, of Berlin, are Hegelians. Sometimes men of this type are honest enough openly to profess their standpoint. Thus Kuenen acknowledges that in his researches of the Old Testament he proceeds from the presupposition that the religion of the Scripture is one of the most important of ancient religions, nothing less but also nothing more. Naturally a philosophical standpoint like this must lead to the most naturalistic interpretation or rather misinterpretation of the sacred oracles.

This divorcement of theological research from practical Church life is aided materially by the subjective character of German thought, in which the practical outcome and result of research do not seem to be understood or appreciated. The philosopher Jacobi was accustomed to say that he was a rationalist with his head, but an orthodox believer with his heart. It has frequently been stated, and is no doubt true, that Wellhausen is a pious man; yet his position on Biblical questions in reality undermines the Divine character of the sacred writings. The warm hearted faith of Delitzsch, his enthusiasm for Gospel work among the lost sheep of the house of Israel, are to not a few strange facts when held side by side with his critical concessions in his latest years. It is a most noteworthy and remarkable fact that the great majority of the clergy of Germany are thoroughly evangelistic. They become such, not at the universities, but through the experience of their sacred office. Nowhere on all the globe is the average sermon more Scriptural and Biblical than it is in Germany, and that too is the case with professors who entertain quite modern views of Biblical criticism. It would be hard to find sermons more satisfactory in this regard than the volume published a few years ago, by Professor Kautzsch, now of Halle, in conjunction with his colleague Weiss, of Tübingen. In evangelical ring and tone they differ but little from sermons from such a man as Luthardt, of Leipzig. The homiletical journals of Germany are deeply instructive in this regard.

In fact the German Christianity and the German Church is much better than its reputation. To a certain extent research and scholarship in Germany are no longer in sympathetic touch and tone with the principles of positive Christianity; but positive Christianity is still the most powerful factor and force in German national character. Protestantism in Germany has its ills and woes, but it is for all that essentially evangelical, and as its countless missions, both home and foreign, show a Christianity full of good fruits. Luther's spirit and Luther's Gospel is still a mighty tower of strength in the Fatherland.—Interior.