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Dr. Orr in Winnipeg.

For the Review.

THE Rev. James Orr, D.D., Professor of Church History in the United Presbyterian Hall, Edinburgh, is giving a series of lectures in Manitoba College, Winnipeg, which is exciting considerable interest not only among the clergy and theological students, but also with many of the laymen of that western city. The best testimony to the lucidity and charm with which Dr. Orr treats the subject is to be found in the fact that the attendance is rapidly increasing as the course advances although it can neither be said that the choice of topics is what would ordinarily be called popular nor that the method of treatment is superficial or gossipy.

Dr. Orr, after a brilliant college course in Glasgow in which he carried off prizes in all departments, was assistant to Prof. Veitch in the University, later, he was for seventeen years minister of a U. P. Church in Hawick and some three or four years ago he was chosen Professor of Church History in succession to the late Dr. Duff. He delivered the first series of lectures on the Kerr foundation, and these lectures, recently published under the title:—*The Christian View of God and the World*,—have attracted wide-spread and favorable attention. He is now delivering in Winnipeg a course of lectures which, also, he recently delivered in Chicago on "The Greater Movements in German Theology and Philosophy of Religion in the Nineteenth Century." The titles of these lectures are given below and this course is to be followed by a course on selected topics in Church History. Some notes of the first lecture, which was introductory in character, are herewith appended.

1. "Introductory Conception of Nineteenth Century Theology—Relation to Eighteenth Century, and to the General Life of the Age."
2. "Kant and his Relation to Theology."
3. "The Speculative School—Hegel."
4. "Schleiermacher: His Philosophy and Theology."
5. "The Hegelian Left—Raur and the Tubingen School."
6. "Aesthetic Rationalism—Fries and De Wette." "The Mediating Theology—Rothe, Heyschlag."
7. "The Liberal Theology—Neo-Hegelianism in Germany and Britain."
8. "Ritschl and the Neo-Kantian School—Lotze and Ritschl."
9. "Ritschl and the Neo-Kantian School—The Ritschlian Theology."
10. "Ritschl and the Neo-Kantian School—Hermann, Kaftan, Bender, and Harneck."

Dr. Orr began with a brief definer of the study of German Theology and quoted Dr. Schaff as declaring that it is "the most learned, original, fertile and progressive theology of the age, and no active branch of Protestantism can keep entirely aloof from its contact without injuring its own interests." Theology as the highest thinking on the highest themes stands in indissoluble connection with philosophy, and in order to get what this lecture aims at a working conception of the nineteenth century theology, it is necessary to give some account of the philosophy of the period. The task is twofold (1) to show the connection of the eighteenth century with the nineteenth century and (2) to prove that the theology of the nineteenth century possesses a life and character of its own.

The eighteenth century was the age of subjectivism and rationalism. It was the age of Bolingbroke and Gibbon in England, of the Encyclopaedists in France, of Leibnitz and Wolff in Germany. Rousseau

was its high-priest. Religious earnestness steadily declined. Theology revelled in rational proofs of faith and the supernatural receded constantly into the background. Yet the seed were already germinating which bore in them the promise of a better harvest. Amid the negations of the time, there were warm hearts like those of Bengel and Klopstock and Yung Stilling. There was also a classical revival in which Lessing and Herdes bore a prominent part, but their work lacked unity and organization, and although this humanist movement was extraordinarily productive it lacked constructive ideas. The last decade of the eighteenth century saw this tendency in its decline: weary with the artificialities of humanism there was a desire to return to nature in science, in literature and in theology. Then came the period of revolutionary influence—the storm and stress which filled Europe and America—weaker natures were driven to pessimism and the stronger learned that freedom can never come from without. This lesson Germany had to learn in the humiliation and bitterness of the Napoleonic wars. Amid these throes of revolution the nineteenth century theology was born. Then came the ascendancy of the Romantic school, represented by the Schillings, Novalis and Fichte. Fostered by the tendencies of the age and under the heel of the oppressor they went to the opposite extreme and instead of belittling the past as the eighteenth century had done, the new era made it everything. All that was best, and positive and germinal in the theology of the eighteenth century was carried into the nineteenth, and yet the prevailing notes of the two are quite different. While that was negative this is positive; while that was subjective this is objective; while that was individual this is universal; while that was destructive, this is constructive.

The leader of the new movement was Kant the great thinker of Koenigsberg, whose lot it was to dig the grave of the past and to sow the seeds of the future. With him originated the idea of a world-unity, the solidarity of man with nature of the solidarity of the varied interests and concerns of human life and etc. It is the part of Theology to unite, build up, co-ordinate these varied elements, and how should theology alone be able to withdraw itself. In this system there is plenty of criticism, but whatever is wrong will fall away like the shavings from the workman's plane as he is nearing the end of his work. The age has no real dislike for systematic theology; the anti-dogmatic spirit which it now manifests is but a passing phrase. It has no real quarrel with any man who will help it to construct its beliefs and verify its convictions in to a satisfying whole. The problems set before our day are in new shapes, so the old answers (although not really wrong) are to be put in new form to meet the changed conditions. The old deistic conception of God's relation to nature, as Zoeler held it, must be abandoned. The world exists for an ethical end, and the idea of a kingdom of God has re-asserted itself all along the line, as the goal of the Divine rule.

In closing the lecturer said. "I am far from saying that there is no evil mixed with the good, but I do believe that so far from theology, or interests in its tasks decaying, there never was an era from which as much could be anticipated in the hope of reconstruction and positive result as the present. When the gains of the century come to be reckoned up its achievements in theology will not be the least of its glories."