

of biographies with the same subject. In France, Pressensé is perhaps the foremost; in Germany we have had Schenkel's book, and the great work of Keim, while in England, a succession of works of more or less importance, some of them of extended popularity, have dealt with this theme. If we except Keim's *Geschichte Jesu von Nazara*, this work of Weiss's is certainly the most important contribution to the subject which has been made during the last twenty years. In some respects we place it even before the work of Keim; and its point of view will render it much more acceptable to most students of the Life of Christ. It is a book of solid learning and solid thought. No man could have written it unless he had studied in the most thorough and exhaustive manner the whole literature of the subject. But it is not the work of a mere accumulation of learning. The writer is a thinker, a theologian, a man of deep sympathy with humanity and with religion. If his conclusions are, in some respects, different from those which are current among ourselves, we shall, probably, for that very reason, find his work the more helpful and instructive.

Dr. Weiss has already distinguished himself as a writer on the Gospels. He maintains strongly the priority of St. Mark's Gospel among the four. He has been chosen to edit the great Commentary of Meyer. The results of these studies are seen in his present work. A considerable portion of the first volume is devoted to a critical examination of the sources. By this means he professes to ascertain the comparative value of the various Gospels and the method to be adopted when apparent discrepancies occur. It need hardly be said that Weiss, like Neander and others of the liberal-conservative school of theologians in Germany, does not think it necessary to assert the exact historical accuracy of every statement in the Evangelical narrative.

Although the method of Weiss may, from the old orthodox point of view, seem rather "free," he has no sympathy at all with his rationalistic or mythical predecessors. He is distinctly a supernaturalist, and recognizes the miraculous element in Revelation. He is therefore more nearly allied to High Lutherans, like Delitzsch or even Hengatemberg, than with destructives like Paulus or even Schwarz. If he cannot accept either verbal inspiration or ecclesiastical authority, he is far removed from the pantheistic, or even the merely deistic, point of view.

As frequently happens to men who refuse to take an extreme position, Weiss has laid himself open to the charge of belonging to the "Mediation" school. It may be well to give his own remarks on this point. "Because," he says, "I have never been able to identify myself with one of them, and because there is a common inclination to impose upon every theological work the etiquette of a theological standpoint, it will be easy to characterize my book as a production of the Mediation school of theology, the very name of which, in the case of many both in the right and left, means condemnation. For my own part, I, too, must repel this title entirely, because of its being utterly misleading. Between a supranaturalism which believes in the actuality of an objective Divine revelation and of miracle in the proper sense, and the standpoint which regards both as inadmissible, there can be as little scientific (not *historical*, as the English translation renders improperly *wissenschaftliche*) mediation, as between the conception of Christ as a mere man—although the greatest and most unattainable, who possessed clearer ideas of God and divine things, and lived a new and typical religious life—and the Christ worshipped by the Christian Church from the beginning as the Divine Mediator and Redeemer. In respect to this alternative, I have never entertained a doubt, and I express none in this book. I have never attempted to mediate between these opposites, just because I am acquainted with their fundamental principles, and my scientific labours have only confirmed me afresh in joyous assurance of the faith which I did not gain from them, and which none can gain by scientific demonstration."

We have sufficiently indicated the principles by which the author has been guided in the preparation of this work. Whether he has applied them with uniformity is a question which will be variously decided. While he occupies the supernatural point of view he considers himself entitled to consider critically the credibility of any particular statement of the Gospels. Thus he seems to consider the story of the miraculous conception as legendary, while he yet does not regard the Lord Jesus as being the son of Joseph. His notions on the subject of the Incarnation, moreover, are different from those which have received the seal of ecclesiastical authority. In regard to the miracles, however, and especially the miracle of Resurrection, he speaks with no kind of uncertainty. To him, as to the Church, the Resurrection is the corner-stone of Christian Revelation.

If we take the first miracle, we shall soon see the difference of his method from that of the rationalistic and that of the mythical school. According to Paulus, Jesus and his disciples did provide wine; but they brought it with them, as a sort of kindly joke, knowing that the bridegroom and his

relations were poor. And Bunsen seems to have held substantially the same opinion. According to Strauss no such incident occurred. The story grew out of the Jewish expectation that the Church must do greater miracles than Moses. As the latter turned water into blood, so the Church must turn water into wine. As an example of the "Mediation" school, Lange's view may be mentioned, according to which the water was not changed, but only the subjective state of mind of the guests, so that they thought they were drinking wine when they were drinking water! Weiss brushes all these theories aside, as well as the attempts made by some orthodox writers to minimize the miracle. Explain as you will, he says, the narrative of St. John. Either it is a miracle or an imposture. It is not an imposture, and no attempt to explain how the miracle was performed will make it less of a miracle.

His account of the feeding of the four thousand will be less satisfactory to many readers. He thinks that it is a kind of echo of the earlier miracle, and that only one of this kind was wrought. He thinks it most unlikely that the disciples would so soon have forgotten the previous miracle. We imagine that human experience would very easily account for such forgetfulness; but we have not space to argue the question.

The chapter on the Resurrection deserves the most careful study. It is not that there is much new here: the controversy has been almost exhausted. But the points are put in a clear and condensed form. There are also some excellent remarks on the theory of Schleiermacher, which is akin to that of Paulus. On the whole, the English translation may be taken as a fair and accurate representation of the original. We have noted one slip, and there are some others. We object to the word "historiary" when the words "historical character" would do quite as well, and here and there the German is a little prominent; but on the whole, the work is well done, and will not mislead the reader. C.

POLITICS AND SOCIETY AT OTTAWA.

It is a rule with a certain school of novelists to have a double courtship running through their plots, the one standing well out, the other kept in the background. Thus while my Uncle Toby assaults the heart of Widow Wadman, Corporal Trim lays siege to the sensibilities of the widow's maid. In the drama of politics, likewise, there is a two-fold action. We have the game as played in Parliament, on the hustings, in the lobby, in the closet of the wire-puller, and in the dark alleys of intrigue, and we have it as represented in the genteel comedy of the drawing-room.

The leader of society is the wife of the Prime Minister of the Dominion for the time being; its nominal head is at Rideau Hall, but without real power. The spell of rank, indeed, has a double potency—what may be called its natural influence, and the influence which it exercises on people, many of whom feel a kind word from a lord to be an act of infinite condescension, and few are proof against a sense of desolation if they are not found in the silver circle of the invited to Rideau Hall. We say silver circle, for there are dozens of houses in every city in Canada which people who find easy admittance to the Government House could by no possibility enter as guests. One can always tell by the tone in which a Governor-General is discussed in any company who has been neglected, and who treated with becoming respect. At one time the best people will unbosom themselves because persons of defined social position and political consequence have been neglected, while Rideau Hall is filled with a mob of regular civil servants, reinforced by the camp followers of that noble army of martyrs to routine; at another the civil servants will be loud in their wail because the lines are drawn too close, and the rich and powerful alone are favoured. It is unreasonable to expect that English A.D.C.'s, when they first come out here, can avoid mistakes. If they trust to their own judgment they will infallibly proceed on false analogies. Knowing that in the civil service in England the younger sons of peers and good commoner families find a scope for their talents, or a refuge for their imbecility, how can it enter into their hearts to conceive the circumstances from which the civil servant in Canada emerges? How can they divine the motives which lead to the admission to the Departments of members of the outside staff, male or female? The consequence is that when Rideau Hall determines that the wives of leading politicians shall not manage the court, it falls into the hands of a few nobodies in every sense, who avail themselves of the opportunity to pay off favours and grudges, and to pour contempt on "those vulgar members of Parliament." Naturally the members of Parliament begin to growl, and talk of overhauling the vice-regal accounts, and of reducing the Governor's salary from \$50,000 to \$25,000 a year. "No more money shall be squandered on useless promenades through the country," they cry, "if we are to be ignored and