

universally popular writers as Ian Maclaren, J. M. Barrie, and Crockett. This school has created one of the great purifying forces of our generation.

"They are entirely sweet in their ethical temper, and its chief representatives are not ashamed to confess that they cherish the high hope and faith of the Gospel. Perhaps its foundations do not always go down to the roots of the mountains. It may be compared to one of those floating islands which are adorned with fair flowers and delightful fruits, but they lack secure anchorage amidst the drifting seas.

"Delighting to depict the gracious and beautiful sentiments and dispositions which have been nurtured in the homes where the Bible is read and its teachings reverently discussed, this body of writers is prone to constitute such sentiments the tests and the determinative forces of Christian theology. The hardness of the old doctrine of decrees, of the abstract rights of divine sovereignty, and of limited redemption, have been softened to the point of almost complete maceration."

It is pointed out that among the earliest and latest workers of this school, salvation outside the Church is no uncommon thing. Some of the best types of religious life are to be found outside kirk and meeting-house. This may be a protest against High Calvinism, and a testimony to the breadth and perennial energy of the Gospel; but as a result of this kind of teaching is there not a danger of our too readily assuming the presence of Christian character apart from the Christian Churches?

No careful reader, particularly of George Macdonald's works, can have failed to notice the emphasis that is put on natural processes in the work of man's salvation—fiddles, kites, landscapes, music, and friendship, all are used in turn for man's moral and spiritual moral and spiritual uplifting. Readers of "Robert Falconer" will remember the part that the skilful violin playing of Robert had in the restoration of his father

to moral manhood. There is danger lest we should think that the centre of regenerating force has been shifted from the cross of Christ to the phenomena of Nature, or the works of men's hands.

But especially is this school open to criticism in its conception of the Divine Fatherhood, which is a mere confection of spongy sentiment.

"From the time of the Reformation onwards, the conception of God has been one-sided; but the peril of fragmental and unsymmetrical views is now as great in another direction. The modern temper is inclined to interpret the Divine Fatherhood from a sentimental standpoint, and to make domestic emotions a scale by which to measure God and the principles of His government. The eternal mystery is built up out of thin, delicate sections of flesh-and-blood sensibilities, and then we are told we have a true view of God; and that at the sound of sackbut, psaltery and harp, we are to fall down and worship the image. But it is not possible to create the ideal Fatherhood which is synonymous with God out of any number of superfine and rarefied human feelings, for ideal Fatherhood must include righteousness. The theology of modern fiction often treats God's relation with mankind as though it were the parenthood which rules a French family consisting of one child only; and such an error could perhaps take its rise only in a generation habituated to look at things from a standpoint of overweening individualism. When paternal love has two or more children to deal with, it must take the scales of justice into one hand and the sword into the other, and become august and unswerving righteousness."

The genesis of redemptive work is to be found in the Fatherhood of God; but that is a different thing from the effeminate type of domestic love which is forgetful of moral equity, and which modern fictionists depict as the God of the Bible.

This paper is now too lengthy to enter into the conception of sin held by members of this school. Suffice it to say that George Mac-