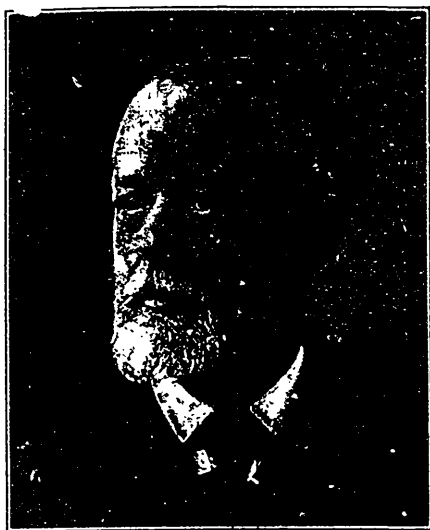


CHRISTIAN FAITH IN AN AGE OF SCIENCE.*



PROF. WM. NORTH RICE, PH.D., LL.D.

Many persons have been much concerned at the apparent conflict between God's two revelations of science and religion. There have been many attempted reconciliations between these two. But none of them were adequate and satisfactory. Professor Rice, an accomplished scientist of Wesleyan University, upon the ground that the purpose of the Bible is moral and spiritual edification, and not scientific instruction, which would be incomprehensible by the successive ages through which God's Word has been a beacon of light and hope, shows the changes of interpretation necessary to make certain passages of Scripture and Christian doctrines correspond with God's revelation of Himself in the realm of science.

The principles of the unity in constitution of the universe, the conservation of energy, and the theory of Evolution, by which all nature reached its present degree of development, are clearly in the first part of this book set forth. Chapters are devoted to the antiquity of man, genesis and geology, nebular theory, origin of

species and origin of life, and theological bearings of evolution. This book meets frankly and fairly, in our judgment, the difficulties of literal interpretation of the creation story of Genesis, the temptation and fall of our first parents. The argument along this line is analogous to that of Professor Drummond in his "Ascent of Man," though fortified, we judge, with fuller scientific treatment.

The second part discusses Christian doctrines of the personality of man and of God, of law, nature, providence, prayer, miracle, revelation, and the Bible, and finally the general studies of Christian evidences.

Our ministers and thoughtful laymen will find this book exceedingly helpful in meeting many of the difficulties which concern them in the interpretation of the will of God.

On the subject of the Fall, Professor Rice agrees with Drummond that the Fall was not the precipitation of man from a condition of supernal intellectual and moral elevation into abysmal degradation, but there was, with the first act of sin, a potential fall absolutely measureless in the forfeiture of possibilities inconceivably glorious. It is sin, and sin alone, that has forfeited that possibility of boundless glory.

"To this conception of the Fall," continues Professor Rice, "the soteriology of the New Testament adjusts itself without difficulty. Christ came, not to make man what Adam was, but to make man what Adam might have become if he had not sinned; not to restore a Paradise once possessed, but to create a Paradise whose boundless possibilities of glory had been forfeited through sin."

"In the relation of prayer to the laws of the moral universe," he writes, "we recognize the ground of the omnipotence of prayer in a certain sphere of our life." When we pray for the forgiveness of sin we are warranted in the faith that the specific thing asked for will be granted. To doubt such prayers would be to doubt the faithfulness of God and the words of Jesus, "Ask and it shall be given you." Outside the supreme sphere all petitions must be offered in the spirit of submission." Answers to prayer come to us, not contrary to law, but in harmony with law, and in the very course of the operation of law."

"Christian Faith in an Age of Science."
By William North Rice, Ph.D., LL.D., Professor of Geology at Wesleyan University.
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