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### THE THEOLOGY OF RITSCHL.

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*Lecture by Rev. John Currie, D.D., Professor of Hebrew and Old Testament Exegetics, delivered at the opening of the College, Nov. 6th, 1895.*

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GERMANY, it has been said, thinks for the rest of Europe: some would add, and for America too. This is a high claim, and, while we cannot stop to examine its validity, the admission must be made that more than any other country in Christendom Germany affects the trend of biblical scholarship and gives shape to religious thought. And this need occasion no wonder, for through a long series of years the nation has yielded a large per-centage of scholars who, on the principle of the division of labor, have become specialists in every department of theological science, not only mastering in minutest detail the material accumulated by their predecessors, but working in new lines, contemplating truths from new standpoints, and drawing conclusions which while not always correct are notwithstanding stimulating and not unfrequently productive of good. But subsidiary to this main cause, and a necessary outcome of it, are two considerations both of which are important factors in giving our Teutonic friends this high vantage ground. The press, with untiring energy, is spreading abroad thousands upon thousands of volumes of German literature; some in the original and others in the form of translations. These are read with avidity, and while in some cases they only arouse the reader to repel with weapons old or new what he regards as attacks upon the truth, in other cases the material is assimilated, and forming a part of the mental equipment of English scholars finds its way to the public in the goodly volume or the Quarterly Review, or the popular monthly. Then, it is the great ambition of students in the United States as well as in England and Scotland to take a complete or a post-graduate course at Berlin, Leipzig, or some other great German university. Attendance upon such a course is generally recognized as a high certificate of scholarship. When a chair becomes vacant, other things being equal, the candidate who has prosecuted his studies in

Germany has the best chance of the appointment. Thus, educational centres are largely occupied by men who bear the impress of the German universities. And surely this in itself can be no evil, for such an advantage as German training, if properly improved, broadens the view, unshackles the mind from prejudice, and teaches the utility of scientific methods of study. It is only when the student blindly surrenders himself to the guidance of an admired teacher, accepting half truths for whole, and regarding hypotheses as facts, and acute speculation as a new form of revelation, that real injury is sustained.

Though the German mind moves rather in the groove of exegetical theology and biblical introduction, still there have been times when a religious system has been propounded and has received extensive adherence, mainly due to some peculiarity which was regarded as meeting a felt need of the human heart. This will account, at least partly, for the ready acceptance of the teachings of Schleiermacher in the early part of the present century. The cheerless negations of rationalism had left men without hope, and light broke in upon the darkness when Schleiermacher announced that "religion consisted in the consciousness of entire dependence on God, and that theology is the exposition of the truths or doctrines involved in that consciousness." If "religion resides not in the intelligence, or the will, or the active powers, but in the sensibility, and is a mere form of feeling," then the difficulties connected with the teachings of revelation may be easily waved out of sight. Schleiermacher had spent several years of his early life among the Moravians, and while decidedly opposed to their doctrines he caught something of their spirit, which subsequently induced him to make feeling the centre of his system. And yet a careful examination of this system, especially as expounded by Schleiermacher in his later days, will show that room is left for a development of doctrine which gives Christianity a dogmatic cast. This eminent scholar seems to have been much better than his creed. The late Dr. Charles Hodge, who when a student in Berlin often attended Schleiermacher's church, states that the hymns were eminently evangelical and were printed on slips of paper and distributed at the door. Tholuck relates that Schleiermacher, when sitting in the evening with his family, would often say: "Hush children! let us sing a hymn of praise to Christ." Schleiermacher has no longer a distinct dogmatic following, yet his influence is still felt tho' perhaps not recognized.

The teaching of Ritschl who has only recently passed off the stage, is in some respects like that of Schleiermacher, but in others very different. The two systems are similar in giving such prominence to the subjective in religion as to leave portions of the Scriptures unheeded as an authoritative standard of faith and practice. They are dissimilar in that the one is under an intellectual bias which seems to leave little room for emotional play, while the other is characterized as a religion of feeling, making the heart its principal seat. Both systems are remarkable for a strong and extensive hold upon many of the brightest minds in Germany, and for shaping the views of thinkers and writers who in other countries are grappling with the difficult theological questions of the day.

The rapid spread of the theology of Ritschl has been quite phenomenal. Those who are best acquainted with its rise and progress, assert that in

Germany at present no religious influence is so potent, and none promises such universal sway. Strong names like Harnack and Kaftan and Herrmann have given it a steadfast and enthusiastic adherence. The scholarship of such men has been regarded as a proof that this new phase of religious thought must be vastly more than the mere shallow and ephemeral, while their zealous and fascinating advocacy has forced it upon the attention, if not the reception, of thousands of young men who have come under the spell of their teaching. Chair after chair in the German universities has been captured, and the indications are that Ritschlianism shall soon have a preponderating influence in nearly all of these seats of learning. The attentive student of the literature of the day need not be told that already this new theology has made itself felt both in Great Britain and on the continent. Not that it can as yet count many as professed disciples, but that its teachings are more or less marked. The late Edwin Hatch was its Oxford exponent. Dr. Herron of America, who has written extensively on Christian sociology, shows sympathy with it in his views of the person of Christ and the atonement. At least one American periodical gives it hearty advocacy. Review articles and published lectures show a leaning in this direction. And occasionally from the pulpit, and even from the platform of the evangelist, the way of salvation is indicated as submission of the will to God, without any reference to the expiatory sacrifice of Christ. And yet it is doubtful whether this system can ever seriously affect theological thought here or in Britain, for the English mind is too much of the matter-of-fact type, and, in evangelical churches especially, is too strongly wedded to the principle that the Bible is the only rule of faith and practice. In its diluted and hence its more dangerous form, however, it may spread, and the conservators of the truth should be on the alert ready to indicate deviation from the plain teaching of scripture.

## SKETCH OF RITSCHL.

The remarkable man who has given rise to this new theology, Albrecht Ritschl, was born at Berlin on the 25th March, 1822. He was the son of a preacher and counsellor who was afterwards appointed Bishop and General Superintendent of Pomerania. Albrecht was a student of theology from his youth, giving promise at an early period that a noted if not a brilliant future lay before him. The first years of his university life, (1839-41), were spent at Bonn. The next two years found him at Halle where he received his degree as doctor of philosophy. From Halle he passed to Heidelberg, and from Heidelberg to Tübingen. In 1846 he is found again at Bonn, but this time as a teacher, and his theological standpoint is that of Baur. For six years his teaching seems not to have attracted much attention, if a small attendance upon his lectures is any evidence. In 1852 he was appointed Extraordinary, and in 1859 Ordinary Professor. Dissatisfied with the scholasticism and the speculation which had so affected German religious thought, he now began to formulate what he regarded a more promising theology. In 1864 he received an appointment at Göttingen as the successor of Dorner. Here he met with Lotze, whose philosophy he professes to have accepted, and here he elaborated and taught his own theological system till his death in 1889.

The mention of these great centres of learning with their various phases of thought, will show what opportunities Ritschl enjoyed to study different religious and philosophical systems, and by comparison judge of their weakness or their strength, and how all along he was being taught wherein as he supposed consisted a more excellent way. Nitzsch, Neander, Erdmann, Tholuck, Julius Müller, Rothe and Baur, were successively his teachers; and it need be no wonder that, however different their teaching, they all for the time contributed to the formation of his views.

Ritschl's biographers have noticed his receptivity, especially during his student career. Whether he sat at the feet of Neander or Baur, Tholuck or Rothe or Müller, he was an earnest and appreciative hearer, so much so indeed that he might be supposed to be fickle in his theological opinions. This phase of character may seem to be irreconcilable with what in after years was manifested both in his teaching and writings, a tenacity of purpose to adhere to the system of theology he had then formulated. But the apparent inconsistency may be explained by the supposition that during his earlier years he was in quest of a system which would reconcile many conflicting views in the great domain of theology, and would form a haven of rest for multitudes who were tossed upon the sea of doubt. Add to this that Ritschl's habit as a student seems to have been to bring all teachings to the standard of a personal utilitarianism, so as to speak, that is, when any doctrine was propounded he applied it to himself in its practical aspect to test its utility, without giving himself much trouble to ask whether the doctrine could be logically sustained or not. His question was, Has it value for my personal wants? If so, I shall accept it as a part of my belief. This point settled, the doctrine was received or rejected according as it was or was not regarded of practical value. This peculiarity which seems to have characterized Ritschl during his whole life has given rise to the expression "worth-judging" or "value-judging" as applicable to the method pursued by this school in their investigations.

#### REASONS OF POPULARITY OF RITSCHLIANISM.

It is somewhat difficult to fully account for the phenomenal popularity of the system of doctrine known as Ritschlianism. Generally in such cases there is some one cause, not however to the exclusion of other causes which are subsidiary. But here no one cause stands out so prominently as to overshadow all others. It is for the philosophy of history, in dealing with great movements in church or state, to indicate causes, assigning them their position as factors in inducing certain courses of events. It may yet be premature to attempt such a work for Ritschlianism, though the movement has long since passed its initial stages and by this time should furnish some clue to a rational explanation of the hold it has taken upon German Christendom. American rather more than English writers are dealing with the question, and while they admit that sufficient data are not yet available on which to form a final judgment—for further developments are necessary—they agree in asserting that in some measure they can see what are and what are not some of the causes.

According to his biographers there was nothing in Ritschl himself to give the movement its popularity. Mohammedanism and some other religions were not only initiated but rendered successful by the marked personality of their founders; but Ritschl could lay no claim to intellectual superiority over many of his compeers, nor was he possessed of that magnetic force of character which attracts and sways men whether they will or not. He was not remarkable for amiability, but on the contrary was inclined to be rough and intolerant. Then, regarding his writings, so far from possessing charm they are described as being heavy and not unfrequently so obscure as to border on the unintelligible. Thus personality and literary skill must be ruled out as factors. Nor does the system of doctrine itself possess any charm, for even when expounded by clearer heads and more facile pens than those of Ritschl, it lacks a definite statement of the fundamental truths of the gospel, and is often provokingly hazy just at times when the reader desiderates clearness.

Nor, as has been said, can the doctrinal positions of Ritschlianism assert a right to novelty; for it would be difficult now in the exposition of Christianity to claim as the foundation of a new creed the discovery of some heretofore overlooked phase of truth. Ritschlianism does indeed assert that one of its distinguishing characteristics is making the person Christ and not the creed concerning Christ the object of faith. But this claim is by no means exclusive, for in Germany itself, pietists and mystics with whom Ritschl will have no fellowship, put in the foreground their personal relation to a Saviour; while everywhere evangelical churches, no matter how the fact is expressed, do not trust in dogma but in Christ himself. Besides, Ritschl does not profess to be an iconoclast. He does not assert that his mission is to demolish the church of his fathers and erect upon its ruins a structure more stable and fair. On the contrary, he professes that his work is that of a reformer who would recall to experiences which should never have been lost.

Scholars who have made the study of Ritschlianism a speciality, tell us that the popularity of the system is largely traceable to three causes. First, it never loses sight of the truth that Christianity is an intensely practical religion, coming into contact with every point of human life and thus producing rich experience. And closely connected with this practical estimate of religion is the professed rejection of the undue influence which metaphysics and philosophy would exercise in the formulation of religious opinion. And so far good. Religion if anything at all is practical—it does come into contact with our life and powerfully influence it; and while it willingly accepts when necessary the aid of a true metaphysic and a rational philosophy, it keeps them in their proper place, assigning them their work and prescribing them their bounds. Secondly, Ritschlianism whilst subjective in its operations, dealing largely with the so-called “value-judgments,” has no place for any emotional exhibition of the pietistic type, and it accords liberty in depreciating the claims of the supernatural. And, thirdly, very rarely in the history of the German churches has there been such zeal as in the propagation of this new faith. The attitude of its adherents is decidedly aggressive.

There can be no doubt that in Germany the teachings of rationalism have been so prevalent that many of the people are becoming wearied of heartless negotiations and are beginning to crave teaching which in some measure at least speaks home to the heart. But, on the other hand, the aversion to certain phases of the supernatural is so strong that the restraints of an orthodox creed are unpalatable. Hence, as the Samaritans of old "feared God but served idols," many in Germany are prepared to acknowledge the general suitability of Christianity to human wants, but at the same time they are not prepared to accept the doctrine of the supernatural as contained in the Scriptures and as ordinarily presented. Now, what soil could be better prepared to receive the seed of the new doctrine than this? And is it any wonder that this seed, receiving such a lodgment, should bring forth fruit some thirty, some sixty, and some one hundred fold? If ever Ritschlianism spreads to any great extent in England and America, it will be largely owing to the same causes—on the one hand a recognized need of some of the provisions of Christianity, and on the other a dislike to the doctrine of the supernatural.

#### PLACE OF RITSCHLIANISM AS A CREED.

With these explanations the statement may be accepted that Ritschlianism is an attempt to assign religion a standing between rationalism and an evangelical creed. This statement does not imply that Ritschl knew that rationalism was wrong and that an evangelical creed was right, nor the reverse, for he had his own standpoint from which to contemplate the field; but his aim was so far as possible to unify schools of theological thought as widely sundered as the poles. How far this desire, irrespective of his own doctrinal views, may have influenced him in moulding his system, it is difficult to say, but as a leading principle he propounded the doctrine that "the inward realities of the Christian life" was the grand essential of religious truth, and that abstruse, perplexing, doctrinal questions which had divided the church into so many hostile camps, might well be relegated to the background. His watch-word was, let the church rally around the truths of Christian experience or the fact of the Christian life.

While this was the main motive that actuated Ritschl, it has been supposed by some writers who have given close attention to the system that he had another aim, the desire to place religion beyond even the suspicion of being vulnerable at the hands of natural science. In recent years such marvellous discoveries have been effected in the domains say of geology, biology, and physiological psychology that there is danger of antagonizing the teachings of the Bible and the revelations of science. Hence it was Ritschl's aim to elevate religion to such a height that it could not be affected by scientific investigation. Personal experiences of a religious nature could not be thrown into the crucible of the chemist, nor tested by his blowpipe, nor crushed beneath the hammer of the geologist, nor resolved into its constituent elements by the assay of the analyst. Thus, religion and secular science need not be antagonized. Let science care for the material world, the domain of religion is personal experience which scientific research cannot touch. Such question as, How can we reconcile Genesis and Geology? How are the teachings of

Scripture to be harmonized with theories regarding the origin of species? need give no trouble whatever. What though there is an irreconcilable difference between revelation and science, there is no occasion for concern, for we have to do solely with value-judgments.

Although Ritschl disclaims all idea of permitting metaphysics or philosophy to sway him in the formulation of his views, he has accepted the teachings of a certain critical school and has in consequence seriously failed in presenting biblical truth in its simplicity. Stählin, in his recent work *Kant, Lotze and Ritschl*, shows that this new theology is affected by a theory of cognition propounded by Kant but modified somewhat by Lotze. According to this theory our knowledge is the knowledge of appearances or phenomena, the so-called "thing-in-itself" does not become an object of knowledge. This, Stählin maintains, is the logical outcome of Ritschl's theory of cognition. Although Ritschl himself claims that phenomena which alone come within the sphere of cognition imply beyond doubt the existence of the "thing-in-itself." Stählin's work is admirable as a contribution to the philosophical side of the theology, although perhaps somewhat partizan in spirit since it presses Kantian principles to consequences which Ritschl is not willing to accept.

Closely associated with this assumption is another similar in character. Since religion does not come within the range of the senses, or more correctly since it is suprasensuous, a knowledge of it must be grounded on the moral consciousness. Theoretical knowledge, or knowledge of the world, is obtained from phenomena—the "thing-in-itself" being unknowable, although its existence may be implied; but religious knowledge, which Ritschl separates from theoretical knowledge, is to be obtained from moral consciousness. This theory of knowledge, of course, affects Ritschl's religious belief very seriously. With the science of "things-in-themselves" he has nothing to do. Theology has to deal only with value-judgments. We can know only the worth to us of revealed things but not the character of the agency, nor its manner or way of working. It is not difficult to see what a latitude such a position as this gives to the theologian. To a great extent it places revelation in the background, not indeed so much openly antagonizing it as tacitly ignoring it. What by evangelical churches is regarded as the teaching of scripture concerning the being of God, the original state of man, original sin, the pre-existence and divinity of Christ, and kindred truths, is virtually rejected. And yet it must be remembered that the Ritschlians do not admit that they are regardless of the teaching of revelation, but they attach their own meaning to the term, restricting it in its signification. Harnack, professor of dogmatics in the university of Berlin, and easily one of the foremost scholars of to-day in his special department, labors to show that while Christianity as a system was very simple as taught by its founder and his apostles, in course of time it became corrupted and overloaded with a mass of foreign conceptions, and that when this foreign element is eliminated the residuum is the truth in its purity. Greek thought, he maintains, had much to do at an early period in formulating Christian dogma, and has made its impress felt in the creeds of the churches. In his description of the development of Christian doctrine, he has with great learning endeavored to make good his position, especially as regards the



doctrine of the person of Christ; but his arguments have been met, and by none more successfully than by Prof. F. H. Foster, of America, who has made a speciality of this study. He meets Harnack in the arena of his own choosing, and shows from the *Didache*, and from Clement, Ignatius and other writers of sub-apostolic times, that Greek thought could not have read into the scriptures phases of doctrine which orthodox churches assert is contained in the scriptures themselves. In other words it is claimed that in tracing the history of the development of doctrine, the very early Christian writers show that they hold views which were obtained from a legitimate study of the Bible and not from the influence of Greek thought.

#### LEADING DOCTRINES OF RITSCHLIANISM.

We may now notice in order some of the leading doctrines of this new religion. Owing to the obscurity of Ritschl's style, to the nebulous character of the system itself, and to the difficulty of clothing abstract German thought in the garb of another language, English writers have been in danger either of misapprehending Ritschl's views, or of failing to convey to the mind of the reader a correct representation of what he really taught. In addition to all this, there is the probability of bias, on the one hand attributing views which in every instance are alleged to be diametrically opposed to scripture, and on the other seeing nothing but the dawn of a brighter day for religious truth. In outlining Ritschl's system it is best to use his own words when the meaning is sufficiently clear, but when not sufficiently clear we must invoke the aid of Ritschl's most reliable expositors.

The Ritschlian doctrine of divine revelation leaves no room for any knowledge of God except that obtained through the manifestation of his grace in Christ. Proofs of the existence of God drawn from Natural Theology have no place here. Revelation is not communicated through doctrine but through the Christ of history in whom was God's presence, and through whom were manifested the character and purposes of God, and the nature of sonship to God, an exemplification of which was given in Christ's own person. If then we wish to know what God's will concerning men is, what he would have them do, how they are to enter into the relationship of sonship with him and attain the great end of their being, we must look to Christ. And if proof be sought for the reality of such a revelation, we are not allowed to find it in the miracles of Christ, not even in his resurrection, for this would be regarding the matter objectively, and "value-judgments" have room only for the subjective, but proof is to be found in that experience of soul which, when brought into contact with Christ, realizes that God is with him, and also in that experience which testifies that soul-contact with Christ alone meets the felt wants of humanity. Thus subjectively we are furnished with proof that Christ is the revelation of God. At first sight this view of revelation seems to be quite in accordance with scripture, for Christ himself says, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father;" but it is objectionable on various grounds. It does not define the meaning of revelation. We wish to know the origin of the truths it professes to exhibit. Were they from God? If so, how did Christ himself regard them? Or, if they

emanated solely from himself what guarantee have we that either in excellency or in authority they are superior to the instructions of any mere human teacher possessed of exalted genius? Then, this view of revelation is unsatisfactory in the narrowness of its range. It gives no explicit utterance about such topics as the being and character of God, about sin, atonement, the pre-existence of Christ, the constitution of his person and kindred doctrines. These are either passed by silently or receive a meaning at variance with the teaching of scripture. Ritschlianism seems first to determine a theory of religion, and then to accept or reject the doctrines of revelation according to the postulates of that theory. It is easy to see how such a view of Revelation leaves open a door for the introduction of erroneous conceptions concerning the Christian system. Truths which we have been wont to regard as vital may be simply ignored, or if recognized at all may be so toned down as to become virtually meaningless.

Regarding Ritschl's theistic conceptions the fundamental principle is, God is love. He loves the human race, and he has sent Christ, who also loves the race, to bring men into the kingdom of God where they may love God and Christ and one another. Now all this is most scriptural. We read that "God is love," that "Christ loved us," and that men who have participated in sonship should love God and Christ and one another. In asserting that the truth "God is love" is an all sufficient definition of the divine nature, Ritschl is guided by the doctrine of "value judgments" already referred to. The question is not what God is in himself, but what he is for us. This is the only question we can answer; and for us, God is love. Says Ritschl, "Cognitions of a religious sort are direct judgments of value. What is God and divine we can perceive even as regards its essence, only when we determine its value as related to our salvation." "We know only as he is made known to us in love; hence we are to regard love as constituting the essence of God. This is the one comprehensive attribute." Though at times Ritschl seems to argue that impersonal love is a possible conception, he accepts the personality of God, insisting, however, that love is the central characteristic of the divine being. Omniscience, righteousness and holiness, denote the manner in which God carries out his loving will in redemption. Righteousness and grace are essentially one: God is righteous inasmuch as he has been faithful to his purposes of love. Holiness in the New Testament sense is vague and indefinite. Now, this Theism is not satisfactory. It makes no room for a trinity of persons. It presents a one sided view of the divine attributes. God is indeed love. But he is more than love: He is holy, and He is just. The history of the world proclaims this truth; Bible teaching, even if only partially accepted, proclaims it; our conscience proclaims it. Then, the field supplying knowledge concerning God is far too restricted. "Value-judging" cannot monopolize the ground, but must permit investigations which embrace all the teachings of natural and revealed religion.

We pass now to a phase of Ritschlian theology which occupies a place in the very fore-front of his system—its view of the kingdom of God. In recent years this has given rise to extensive discussion. Volumes have been written on the subject, quarterly articles and sermons have discussed

it. The nature of the kingdom, the persons who constitute it, its government and kindred topics have all passed under review. The Bible speaks of the universal sway of God whose kingdom saith over all. It also speaks of an *imperium in imperio*—a kingdom within a kingdom, a spiritual kingdom. The fact that in the 16th chapter of Matthew's gospel, that parable chapter, so many phases of the kingdom of heaven are presented, it is no wonder some writers have contemplated the field from one stand point, and some from another. It is best to take these parables just as they are, whether they speak of the cause of God set up in the heart of the individual believer or in the world; whether they speak of the inception of the kingdom in the parable of the sower, or of its consummation in the parable of the draw-net. It is true that the kingdom of God is in the heart of the individual believer—"the kingdom of God is within you," consisting of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost; it is also true that the kingdom of God is set up in the world, the wheat and the chaff grow side by side. It is true that the kingdom of God is here in its initial and progressive stages; it is also true that only the great consummation shall see it in all its glory. It would be well if preachers and writers in discussing the affairs of this kingdom would occupy the proper stand-point, making clear the exact phase they wish to describe. Professor Orr's definition of the term is noticeable:—"The kingdom of God, in its simplest definition, is the *reign* of God in human hearts and in society; and as such it may be viewed under two aspects: (1) the reign or dominion of God in himself; (2) the sphere of this dominion. This sphere, again, may be (1) the individual soul; (2) the totality of such souls (the invisible Church); (3) the visible society of believers (the church); and (4) humanity in the whole complex of its relations, so far as this is brought under the influence of Christ's Spirit and of the principles of his religion." This latter seems to be the view generally held by Ritschl himself who regards the kingdom in an ethical and religious sense and not as embracing all existing relations. Ritschl maintains that "as the very essence of love is to make of another's being one's own personal end," so the love of God has made as its end the kingdom of God. This kingdom is described as "the moral union of the human race through activities springing from the motive of universal love of one's neighbors." God's love is manifest in making provision for the organization of the race into a kingdom as the grand end of man himself. For this kingdom the world exists, and the divine will operates; for this purpose the historical Christ has revealed the Father's love, and would by precept and example bring under its potent spell everything that opposes itself. For this kingdom the Christian Church has been instituted, that through it men universally might be taught to love God and one another. Ritschl's followers do not agree in their views concerning the meaning of this phrase "the kingdom of God." Some like Kaftan and Weiss (Ritschl's own son-in-law) maintain that strictly speaking it can have only an eschatological conception, the kingdom of righteousness on earth being but a moral preparation for the true kingdom in heaven. All, however, assign it a high place, if not the very highest place, in this religious system.

THE PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST.

Regarding their view of the person of Christ, none of the Ritschlians accept the doctrines of orthodox Christianity. Harnack, Kaftan and Herrmann, for example, contend that the generally accepted doctrines concerning the person of Christ is the result of an amalgamation of Christian ideas with Greek thought. They assert that orthodox churches had read into the history of Christ what is purely human, that is, what has originated in the human mind itself. They hold that the development of doctrine has not been legitimate. Their watch word is, Back to the historic Christ. And yet if as scholars we sit at their feet to be led back to the historic Christ, we receive no satisfactory replies to the questions:—Did Jesus Christ pre-exist? Is he divine as well as human? Was his birth supernatural? We are told in reply that these are questions with which we have little or nothing to do, and about which we should not trouble ourselves. But with such questions we have much to do, the whole fabric of Christianity as a religion to meet the wants of men rests upon the true divinity of Christ. Either the records of the history of Christ teach this doctrine, or they do not. If they do not, then Ritschlians are right in rejecting it; but if they do, then we must accept it, no matter what becomes of our objections. We press the question: How can the extraordinary phenomena presented by the historic Christ be satisfactorily accounted for on any other ground than that of the postulate of his divinity? It is not sufficient to say that the predicate of Godhead may be applied to Christ, because it may be affirmed that in a certain sense God was in Christ. This language they do not employ in its ordinary acceptance, and it is liable to mislead. Something more definite is necessary, and that we contend is supplied by the gospel history taken as we have it. Ritschl taught that the Christ of the gospels was raised up to bring men into the kingdom of God. He was like God, for he too was love. By revealing God unto men he would persuade them to love God and one another, in one word to become members of the kingdom of God. His mission was "to establish the Christian church as the community out of which the kingdom of God was to grow." This work Christ performed by his teaching and example. To show his earnestness of purpose and how thoroughly he was in accord with the Father's will, he sealed his testimony with his blood. Christ's sitting at the right hand of God and his coming to judge the world must be resolved into metaphor, or it may be conceived as an expression of the permanent influence of his historical appearance.

From the foregoing statement of the Ritschlian view of the character of God and the work of Christ in revealing God's love, we are prepared to find that the doctrine of the atonement in the ordinary sense has no place in the system. God is love. Justice requires no satisfaction. Violated law asks no redress. When the sinner listens to Christ's teaching, and loves God and his fellow, his sins are forgiven. The sufferings and death of Christ are no more expiatory than those of any one who through devotedness to the cause of God surrendered his life. Christ's sufferings and death are simply a proof of his fidelity in his vocation. The doctrine of penal satisfaction, Ritschl maintains, arose from the Hellenic conception of the retribution of the gods. A nemesis followed

the transgressor and exacted satisfaction. It is held that this belief when applied to the Christian system invested God with the character of a hard-hearted, unforgiving judge. This objection against the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ is not new. It was pressed long before the name of Ritschl was known. The nature of the atonement must be determined not by "value judgments," nor by sentiment, nor by any similar test, but by scripture itself. Its expiatory character like a blood-red thread runs through the whole Bible from Genesis to Revelation. The Jewish sacrifices were worse than meaningless if the doctrine of expiation was not true. The cry of desertion which came down from the cross from an inner darkness more intense than the outer, must prove that Christ was far less a hero than many of his followers have been, if at that moment he was not laying down his life a ransom for many. Ritschl's "Back to the historic Christ," implies a readiness to weigh every truth concerning Christ, provided it affects our interests. How then, we ask, is the cry from the cross to be explained? We meet Ritschl on his own ground, and apply the test of "value judgment." Do not our consciences stricken by guilt, yearn to know not only that God as a God of love forgives sin, but that he does so in a way that shows that he is just while he justifies the ungodly who believe in Jesus? Thus we enter into rest, being at peace with God and at peace with ourselves.

Ritschl's view of reconciliation is purely subjective. God regards sin as ignorance. It is not guilt and it can be readily overlooked. As a loving father, God makes every allowance for sin which partakes so largely of the character of ignorance. And it is man's duty, as well as privilege, to believe that God will overlook sin. According to this view, reconciliation implies not the removal of guilt, but the removal of the consciousness of guilt. This is a purely subjective act. The sinner has only to say, "I have not been what I ought, but God is love; I will come out into the sunshine of his favor and dismiss all fear." But the objection to this theory is that it implies that God is not just in justifying the ungodly. And further, a truly enlightened conscience is satisfied only by the knowledge that the forgiveness received is in full accordance with the requirements of righteous law.

#### CRITICISM OF RITSCHLIANISM.

The above sketch, however meagre, will give an idea of the trend of a theology which is forcing itself upon the attention of the churches. Its teachings are so different from those to which we have been accustomed that we may not think it worth while to master even a sketch of its utterances. But it has strong claims upon our attention. An American professor of high standing, who has made the study of the system a specialty, predicts that Ritschlianism will soon be precipitated upon us in this Continent. Of Ritschlianism as a system, this I think can hardly be affirmed; but it is none the less true that in a diluted form it will find its way among us through books and quarterlies, and magazines and newspapers. While none of the views can be regarded as entirely new, some are common and popular, and these may now be pressed the more powerfully, backed as they are by such noted advocacy as the German universities supply. It is therefore well for all who love the truth, not

only its public conservators but the rank and file of intelligent christians, to have something like a general idea of the leading characteristics of the system.

It must be admitted that in some respects Ritschlianism has done good. In a country noted for cold negations and barren orthodoxy in the domain of the religious, and for systems upon systems of philosophies and metaphysics which more frequently for evil than for good offer aid in formulating and elucidating Christian dogma, the spread of this new theology has not been an unmitigated evil. Professedly at least, it cuts adrift from philosophy and metaphysics and aims at simplicity of presentation. It has emphasized the love of God. And it has continually said, Back to a historic Christ whom God raised up to reveal the divine love to men. If these principles had been taught in connection with a scriptural Christology and correct views of revelation, much benefit would have resulted. Even as it is, the hope may be entertained that the newly awakened interest in a view of religion which in any degree claims to come home to the individual heart to inspire it with love to God and love to man, shall in some respects be productive of good.

Among ourselves, however, we hardly need instruction in these principles even when properly presented. For, while we utilize a true philosophy and a true metaphysic in studying divine truth, we are not in much danger of being misled by systems which may lead no one knows where. Then, the love of God is presented in our public teaching in a manner unmistakably plain. And as for "the historic Christ," it is perhaps the one subject which more than any other receives special attention. In recent years how many volumes have been written on the life of Christ. How many series of sermons have been delivered, and how many Sabbath School lessons have been taught—all speaking of the person, the character and the work of Christ, and of the hope which the cross inspires, and of the motives it supplies "to die unto sin and to live unto righteousness." It is just possible, however, that the prominence given by Ritschlianism to the Christ of history may in some measure account for the present popularity in England and America of a doctrinal presentation which attaches such importance to the life of Christ. If so, then in this respect at least, Ritschlianism has been beneficial.

But there is another side to the picture to refuse to look at which would be the exercise of a false charity. We take exception to Ritschlianism in its views of a divine revelation in restricting it largely to the revelation of God in the history of Christ, and giving heed to its teachings only when they commend themselves as certain "value-judgments" which may differ in different individuals. Indeed the term Revelation is not understood in the ordinary acceptance of the Church. We take exception to Ritschlianism because its theistic conceptions are one-sided. God is love, it is true. But he is also holy and just,—holy in manifesting his hatred to sin, and just in punishing sin either in the sinner himself or in his substitute. Then, Ritschl's Christology is certainly sadly defective. Christ had no pre-existence; he is not divine in the sense of being equal with God; his death has

no value as a propitiation ; and his resurrection in all likelihood never took place. Then, we take exception to the view that sin may be largely regarded as ignorance, that it does not possess the character of guilt, and that God readily overlooks it. The theory of the atonement is eminently unsatisfactory. It makes no provision for the appeasing of a conscience enlightened by the spirit of God and smitten by a sense of guilt ; it leaves the Old Testament sacrifices an enigma, or at least a childish playing at religion ; it leaves unexplained the utterances of Christ himself who represented his death a ransom price ; it throws no light upon the question why on the mount of transfiguration such prominence was given to the decease which Christ should accomplish at Jerusalem ; and it strips Pauline theology of all claim to veracity when it presents the apostle wrongly clamoring for an exhibition of righteousness in the plan of salvation.

According to Ritschl "religion originates in the need which man feels of help from a supernatural power to enable him to maintain his personality against the limitations and hindrances of natural existence." This view gives undue prominence to the subjective side of religion as it does not present the claims that God has upon us, and as it would invoke divine help merely to aid in holding our own against unfavorable environments, "the limitations and hindrances of natural existence." Surely this falls far short of the Bible representation.

Ritschlianism has arisen in a country where restlessness characterizes a speculative bias which, refusing to be satisfied with the teachings of revelation, seeks the solution of the problem of life from sources of human device. Perhaps, after all, the wonder is that Ritschl retained in his system so much that can be placed above religious negations or the disquisitions of a philosophy and a metaphysic as bewildering as they are false.

There can be no doubt that Ritschl keeps in the back ground the doctrine of the supernatural. His definition of miracle is : "The religious name for an event which awakens in us a powerful impression of the help of God, but is not to be held as interfering with the scientific doctrine of the unbroken connection of nature." This virtually explains miracle away, and by implication denies the supernatural.

The question of the supernatural presses for an answer, as at the present day we stand face to face with many systems of theology bearing the name of Christ. This strikes at the very root. As Professor Orr asks, Is there a supernatural revelation ? Is there a supernatural Christ ? Is there a supernatural redemption ? Is there a supernatural hereafter ? The Sacred Scriptures profess to answer these questions. What claim then have they upon our credence ? This point should be settled. Either they are true, or they are not. If not true, we should reject them ; and then like a rudderless vessel be content to drift aimlessly and hopelessly upon the dark surging sea of doubt. But if they are true, if internal and external testimony proves it, if our religious consciousness proves it, then duty is plain. "This is the way walk ye in it." These Scriptures should be subjected to honest and faithful methods of exposition, and their teachings should be decisive. What saith the Scriptures ? How readest thou ? Here alone we have a sure foundation. Every thing else is as shifting sand.

*BESIDE THE BONNIE BRIER BUSH.*

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NO book in recent years has scored such a success as Ian Maclaren's 'Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush,' and assuredly no book ever written has deserved a kinder reception. I think I will voice faithfully the sentiments of at least every Scottish reader of the 'Brier Bush' in the following lines, which, 'though not to the manner born,' I venture to cast in a Doric mould:—

God's blessin' on ye'r cannie pen,  
'Maclaren,' y'er a prince o' men—  
Wi' Burnbrae, ye maun be 'far ben,'  
    To write like yon ;  
A bonnier book a' dinna ken—  
    God bless you, John !

A've read it sax times o'er, a' sweer,  
An' ilka time a' lo'ed it mair,  
Tho' whiles it made my hert richt sair  
    An' gar'd me greet,  
An' whiles a' lauched until a' fair  
    Row'd aff ma seat !

A' day, an' in ma dreams at nicht,  
A'm wanderin' wi' renewed delight  
An' feastin' on each bonnie sicht  
    In yon sweet glen ;  
Conversin' aye wi' a' thae bricht  
    Drumtochty men.

A'm fair in love w' Marget Howe,  
An' truly feel for puir Drumshough,  
An' aye a'm there at Whinnie Knowe  
    Ilk' eventide,  
For there the Bonnie Brier Bush grew,  
    An' Geordie died.

Puir Domsie ! he's as real tae me  
As ony leevin' man can be,  
Whuppin the thistle heids in glee  
    While on his way  
To tell o' Geordie's victory  
    Yon glorious day !

An' Burnbrae, elder o' the kirk,  
An' Hillocks, type o' honest work,  
An' Soutar, wi' sarcastic quirk,  
    An' big Drumshough,  
Wha'd maybe haggle o'er a stirk,  
    But aye wes true.



*Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush*

An' Donald Menzies, 'mystic' chiel  
 (A Celt wes he frae heid tae heel),  
 Wha warstled awfu' wi' the Deil  
     For mony a day,  
 Wi' him a' canna help but feel,  
     An' groan an' pray.

An' Lachlan Campbell, wha wes ca'd  
 'Censorious'; wha regairded God  
 A soverign rulin' wis' a rod,  
     An' no' wi' grace,  
 An' wha the very session awed  
     Wi' ghaist-like face.

Him suffering sair mak's sweet an' mild  
 As shadows veil the Grampians wild  
 Till, 'like unto a little child'  
     He comes tae be,  
 An' o'er the erring and defiled  
     Bends tenderly.

Wi' these and mair, in godly fear,  
 We sit yon Sabbath day an' hear  
 'His mither's sermon' frae the dear  
     Young preacher lad,  
 An' wi' them shed a secret tear  
     That isna sad.

An' wi' them on anither day,  
 When kirk is oot (tho' wi' dismay),  
 We join tae mak' a bold display  
     An' cheer Maclure,  
 Oor doctor, wha, wi' little pay  
     Serves rich an' poor.

Aye, dear Maciure! him maist o' a'  
 We lo'e, an' thro' the drifts o' sna'.  
 Unmindfu' o' the north wind raw,  
     We tearfu' come;  
 Wi' a' the mournin' glen we draw  
     Near-haun his tomb.

An' barin' there oor heids we pray  
 That we may so live ilka day  
 That when we come tae pass away  
     Frae a' things here,  
 Truth may the tribute to us pay  
     O' love wrung tear!

Ay, 'Ian,' ye're 'a lad o' pairts,'  
 An' maister o' a' the winsome airts,  
 Ye'r bookie by its ain deserts  
     Wull live for aye;  
 The benediction o' oor herts  
     Ye hae the day!

J. W. BENGOUGH, '*Toronto Globe*.'

## REMINISCENCES OF THE SUMMER SCHOOL.

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IT is, perhaps, fitting, that this issue of the THEOLOGUE should contain some reference to that very important event of the recess of 1895—"The Summer School of Theology." Stale and unwelcome though this subject may be to some of your readers, yet to many "who like that kind of thing it may be the very kind of thing that that kind of people may like." At any rate there can be little doubt that when the history of the College shall be written, one of the most interesting pages will be the one on which shall be recorded the account of the first session of the Summer School.

The much-talked-of experiment has been made. The "Schule" has met and "Skailed." It is now but a pleasant memory in the minds of its scholars, lingering delightfully, like the mellow and lovely glow in a western sky when the sun is down. Ere that glow be altogether gone, you have asked me to recall some of the sunny scenes of which it reminds me.

A good deal has been written and said—yet not too much I feel sure—of the pleasure and profit enjoyed by us, in body, mind, and soul, on the beautiful banks of the North West Arm, during those bright and bracing days in the latter part of July.

I shall not go into tedious detail. I cannot attempt in these few pages to thread the mazes of thought; to scale the skies and cleave the clouds of speculation; to analyze the subtle and exuberant joys in which we lived and moved and had our being in the course of that ideal holiday. I merely wish to indulge in a few simple reflections of a retrospective character.

In the *first* place I desire to congratulate our beloved Principal Pollok, for it was he who first publicly suggested the idea of a Summer School for our Maritime College. As honour should be given to whom honour is due, we are glad to remember in the hour of success the father of this fruitful idea. His suggestion seized the minds of many, and started a good deal of thinking and discussion in private and public that winter. I well remember the thrill it brought to the hearts of the "visior.w-eaving tribe" of Pine Hill. They were glad to have in the person of their honored Professor and father, Dr. Pollok, a leader in such a worthy innovation; and that too after threatening to join Dr.

Currie in the "hary-cary" act in the waters of the Arm. They rejoice to see him, though fairly full of years and full of cares, "yet of neither weary but full of hope;" and to find him "ready for some adventure brave and new," that of leading his students through green pastures and beside restful waters in the droughty summer season.

In the *second* place I wish to congratulate the THEOLOGUE for seconding so vigorously Dr. Pollok's motion. In every issue during the Session of '92-'93, the question was discussed. The writer remembers being sent on an urgent editorial commission to the Provincial building—the editorial department—which resulted in a brief but forceful letter on the subject from the potent pen of Dr. A. H. McKay. But in spite of such auspicious moving, importunate seconding, and weighty advocacy, the scheme did not mature that year. In 1894, however, a provisional programme was drafted. But Dr. McKnight's death, and the inability of others to take part, necessitated the abandonment of the idea. But the third attempt—true to the old proverb—did not fail. The year 1895 smiled on the promoters' plans and saw them carried to a most successful issue.

In the *third* place, let me congratulate the Faculty who formed and carried out all the plans so courageously and successfully. While the Summer School was under the auspices of the College Board, it was the Professors who shouldered the complete financial responsibility, made the plans, and largely helped to carry them out. Those who enjoyed the privilege of being present feel very grateful to the faculty for the rich repast provided last July.

I need not congratulate those who were there. They have been thanking their lucky stars ever since. On the other hand it is not for me to reprimand the *excuseless* absentees. The loss they sustained must be sufficient punishment for those who might have been but were not there.

But I have been too long skirmishing about my subject. Now for the Summer School as realized. What were some of the elements in its success? I shall not attempt an order of merit enumeration but simply as they come to my pen.

*First*, the range and richness of the fellowship enjoyed. In the large courts of our church this element is unhappily largely lacking.

There is a deluge of business and a dearth of fellowship. We rush together from North, South, East and West, shake hands in fierce haste with a few, look upon the bulk of our brethren *en masse*, and rush home again with a hunger still in our hearts. Standing on earth so much, "Not rapt above the sky" we long for the upper airs of the mount of communion, where truth is transfigured and the heart in rapture glows. By prolonged immersion in pastoral duties we become waterlogged. We need a change, at least once a year—an environment in which we may have the buoyancy restored to our spirits. We need the electric thrill which comes by contact of spirit with spirit.

*Then* we all felt we had found the place, the atmosphere, and the fellowship desired. We all felt in some measure the rapture which prompted Peter to say "It is good to be here." Here the Minor Prophets met the Major and expressed themselves as reciprocally delighted. Here, too, the Maritime men, old and young, eminent and mediocre alike had more or less intimate fellowship one with another and with men of the highest eminence from our sister colleges in the Upper Provinces. Those who believe in the doctrines of Emerson, "Don't take your Gods off their pedestals," would be shocked to see the daring liberties permitted and taken there. It was quite a common sight to see men of world-wide celebrity, who stand on the shining heights of fame, *cheek by jowl* in the class-room, at the table, in the fields or by the way, with men who as yet blush unseen in most modest mediocrity. These could be seen soaring in the rarified but electric atmosphere of Higher Criticism one hour, and ransacking cherry trees or tumbling like a family of porpoises in the waters of the Arm the next. That was life indeed.

One such "crowded hour of glorious life  
Is worth an age without a name."

In the *second* place, let me reflect for a moment upon the physical fare. Is this a descent from the sublime to the commonplace? In the 103rd Psalm, the satisfying of the mouth with good things and the renewing of youth are placed by the Psalmist on the topmost round of the ladder of blessedness. And there is enough of human nature still clinging to the most mystic of our ministers to enable them to appreciate the milk and honey part of the programme. In other words Mr. Gardner's contribution

to the success of the school deserves more than a passing mention. Whatever may have been the experiences of those entertained outside the College, the inside did not break the record of Pharisaic fasting. They did not pine in empty stalls. The land in which we sojourned was not a wild waste where we wandered crying, "O my leanness." It was a land flowing with milk and honey. Some graduates of long standing, as they sipped the latter day nectar around Pine Hill's bounteous board, sighed as they thought on former days and wished they hadn't been born—so soon. Then the surrounding scenery, the garden, the grapes of this Presbyterian School, the lovely landscape, the blue and sparkling waters of the Arm! What shall I say of these? Let your imagination fly free about such a scene. Fill in the picture I have sketched in boldest outline. I forbear, lest the tendency to exaggeration, which the Professor of Homiletics once discovered in my popular sermon, o'ermaster me.

In the *third* place the *programme*. This, of course, was the centre of interest; it furnished the most substantial enjoyment, and was the main element in the success of the school. My treatment of it must necessarily be brief and imperfect. The bill of fare was appetizing. Large expectations were raised and they were fully realized. For ten days we were under a hot and telling fire from a perfect battery of erudition.

Speaking of strangers first, I need only mention the names of Principal Grant of Queen's and Prof. McCurdy of Toronto, to convince all who know them, of the quality of the programme. Both are masters in their departments. Both have won the attention and respect of the critical world. Principal Grant's book on the "Religions of the World," in the Guild Library, is one of the very best of the series. His lectures along the same lines were fresh, stimulating and profound. Those who expected something out of the usual line, yet wholesome and profitable, were not disappointed. All seemed in the end glad that the Queen's angel came down and healingly troubled the waters.

Dr. McCurdy's *magnum opus* on "History, Prophecy and the Monuments," has laid all Old Testament students under great obligation. In the first volume the relation of the Hebrews and Babylonia is treated. In the second, part of which we had the rare privilege of hearing from the living lips of the author

before its publication—the relation of the Hebrews to the Assyrians, Egyptians, Chaldeans and Persians will be exhibited.

The discussions which followed all the lectures were an interesting feature of the school. The great thoroughness of all the lectures was thus brought out. It may not be invidious to make special mention of the amazing readiness Dr. McCurdy showed under cross-fire and friendly criticisms in expanding or elucidating troublesome points. His thorough knowledge of the entire field in which he is working called forth the admiration and applause of the school. The writer was reminded of Lord Melbourne's remark on Macaulay's conversational *aplomb*. He said, "He wished he were as sure of one thing as Macaulay was of everything."

With regard to the services of the members of the College staff propriety demands that I shall say but little. They would doubtless thank me if I said nothing. I may remind them that "The eagle suffers little birds to sing."

The church knows full well the quality and variety of the gifts and graces of the Principal and Dr. Currie. These gifted servants of the church and masters in our College, full of reverend and gracious dignity. Yet youthful and sunny of spirit as their students they delighted their hearers as they drew from the deep rich well of history and the word of Inspiration things new and old. The verdict of the school was that both surpassed themselves. Professor Falconer has been under fire in the class-room for three years. Last summer he was put in a more fiery crucible before the higher and lower critics of our church. Needless to say he passed through the test triumphant and unscathed. The synod has as good reason to be proud of its appointment as the young men of the church have in their enthusiasm for their representative on the College staff.

What shall I say of Dr. Gordon, the latest appointee? If it be true that "Time's noblest offspring is the last," he must needs be noble indeed. Naturally the eyes of all were turned upon him on this occasion. For "when a well-graced actor leaves the stage, the eyes of men are keenly bent on him that enters next." Few, very few, could worthily wear the white mantle which fell from the shoulders of his gifted and saintly predecessor. It will be sufficient to say that Dr. Gordon's conduct in the vacant chair

through last session, and now by his graceful and brilliant treatment of the thorny theme of Revelation, prove that he is one of the very few.

My mention of the work of the evening sessions must be very brief and quite out of proportion to its interest and importance. Messrs. Simpson, McKay, Miller, Rogers, McGregor, Carruthers introduced most practical and animated discussions by thoroughly helpful and thoughtful papers. These evening sessions—and indeed the morning ones—were taken part in by several prominent laymen in our church. Mr. Sanford Flemming led the discussion one evening, and Dr. McKay, Mr. Grierson, Mr. Robert Mitchell, Mr. Waddell and others, contributed much to the discussions.

If I have omitted to mention any prominent on the programme they must pardon me. I have not even a programme before me as I write. What I have written is strictly reminiscent. I hope, too, that the Professors and other lecturers may pardon my crude characterization of their work at the Summer School.

I should say something, I feel, about the attendance. I shall do so in closing. It was good, but "not so good" as it ought to have been. The promoters barely managed to make ends meet. This was in a way satisfactory but by no means ideal. Considering all things, the praiseworthy venture of our Professors, the richness of the programme, and the trifling cost, the attendance was perhaps *disappointing*. I think our Professors had a right to feel that members, especially of our recent graduates, did not do their duty. Many, who might easily have done so, did not raise a hand to prevent the possible failure, in its very inception, of such a fruitful scheme. Of course the attendance at the next is assured by the complete success of the first. We are heartily glad there is to be a next and a next—let us hope, *ad infinitum*.

J. A. MACGLASHEN.

# THE THEOLOGUE.

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## EDITORS :

R. J. GRANT, M. A.

A. W. MACKAY, M. A.

J. D. MACKAY, M. A.

W. R. FOOTE, B. A.

JOHN MACINTOSH, B. A.

G. A. SUTHERLAND.

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## EDITORIAL.

WE offer no apology as we introduce ourselves to you in the pages of Volume Seven, Number One. We do not speak of our fitness or unfitness for the work entrusted to us, but, being entrusted with it, we shall endeavor to make this volume a worthy and efficient organ of our College during this session with the unusually encouraging prospects it promises. But we cannot do this without the hearty co-operation of our students and the kind support of the other members of our constituency. We present no plea for the existence of this paper as a necessary college function, nor do we rehearse the aims and advantages of such a function, but, assuming these, we do appeal to our students, past and present, to come to our help in making this volume what it should be—and may be—a helpful factor of our College life.

Fellow students, if you have any suggestion to make, any advice to offer, any grievance to speak of, which might make the pulse of our college life beat stronger and steadier, you will find in our columns an opportunity of doing so. And if any word is spoken through these columns which to the general reader may seem unnecessary we would ask you to attribute it to the peculiarity of college life and charitably pass it by.

To past students and more experienced friends who may by this time be "far ben" we gladly offer an opportunity,



through our pages. of speaking a word for our edification and profit. We also invite you to assist us, by contributions to our columns, as well as by furthering the circulation of our paper, in making it a means of bringing our College into closer touch with the congregations of our Church.

With these appeals we venture again, although in some cases with some degree of reserve, to introduce ourselves by addressing to our former acquaintances the First Number of this Volume of the THEOLOGUE. As this number makes its curtesies to you, we trust you may not be offended, but may find it agreeable to give it a hearty welcome; not indeed because it pretends to bring to you any new thought or literary excellence, but because it promises to represent to you the interests of our College and seeks an opportunity of speaking for you and to you a word which may be for the interest of our College and consequently for the benefit of our Church.

If a renewed acquaintance shall be distasteful to any of our readers we would gladly learn by a note to that effect so that it might be discontinued; if otherwise, our conscience would be set at ease by the receipt of a *practical* proof of its having been received with favour. Our conscience, we must confess, might not be so disturbed were we not just now in need of financial assistance, and so we feel like asking pardon for the distrust above suggested.

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### CONVOGATION.

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THE opening lecture of the 20th Session of our College was delivered in Chalmers' Church on Wednesday evening, Nov. 6th. Convocations are largely under the dominance of custom, one knows pretty well what to expect, yet there is always some degree of novelty. However uneventful they may seem to the many, yet to the few at least, there are elements of the deepest interest. There is the usual group upon the platform, the customary clusters of students in the pews, but as we look around we realize that changes have been and will be.

\* \* \* \* \*

PRINCIPAL POLLOK touched a thrilling chord in his opening remarks. He carried us back in thought to the ever memorable union of 1875. He remarked upon the difficulties which had to be grappled with in the past, and contrasted the present prosperous condition of affairs. An Institution which has given to the home field two-thirds of its ministers, and has also furnished a noble band of missionaries to the foreign field is worthy of a high place in the affection and prayers of the church. Very tender was his reference to the memory of the departed laborers, who wrought zealously and effectively for the upbuilding of our College.

\* \* \* \* \*

THE lecture on the Theology of Ritschl presented Dr. Currie in the rôle of a student of the German schools. The theme is treated in the Dr's. clear and attractive style. It abounds in those gems of thought and expression, which his students will readily recognize as thoroughly characteristic. While due weight was given to the fascinating features of Ritschlianism, yet, wherever the system conflicted with scripture, the divergence was indicated and the line distinctly and firmly drawn. The inadequacy of "value judgments," and the misconception of the character of God attendant upon the German Theologian's postulates were carefully discussed.

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THE audience was a large and representative and we trust an appreciative one. The time has passed when Greek Dramas might be read in the forum and attract the attention of all. Modern audiences, as a general thing, do not show such mental capacity. Most of us prefer to take our intellectual food in thin solution, —but tastes differ.

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THE OUTLOOK.

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PROBABLY the friends of the THEOLOGUE are never better pleased with its columns than when it voices the prosperity of our College. The outlook for the session upon which we have

now entered is particularly promising. For many years we have depended largely upon Dalhousie for our students, but this year we have within our walls representatives from Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Harvard, Queens, Dalhousie, Manitoba, Mount Allison and Acadia. The number of students enrolled this year is also in advance of what it has been in previous years. For some time our College has been ranked as second to none in Canada. Steadily it has been strengthening its position and extending its influence. The recognized ability of the faculty, the diligence and standing of the students, and the record of the graduates have all tended to popularize the institution. The graduating class of this year which numbers twelve is larger than ever before; the middle year counts a membership of eighteen, while both divisions of the junior class numbers twenty-five.

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*LABRADOR.*

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**M**R. Cock arrived from Labrador on the last day of August. One might have expected on meeting him, to hear him tell how glad he was to get back from the cold and barren shore of Labrador to our more genial clime with all its comforts. He seems, however, to have more to say of his regret at having to return. The people's need, their genuine kindness, and their appreciation of the work done for them have won the hearts of all our Missionaries and interested them so deeply in the work as to make them forget its hardships.

Last spring the difficulty of obtaining a successor to Mr. Cock caused some anxiety. Both Mr. Cock and Mr. Forbes strongly urged the need of an ordained missionary, but our Executive Committee were unable to find one willing to take up the work. It was thus particularly gratifying to us to learn some time ago that the Home Mission Board had secured in Rev. W. McLeod, a man eminently fitted for the position.

Mr. McLeod sailed for Labrador on Sept. 8th. He has already organized a Christian Endeavor Society at Harrington, and made a trip along the coast visiting all our stations. He has also engaged teachers for the winter for two schools, one at Harrington and one at Old Fort Bay.

Everywhere, he has received a warm welcome, and his meetings have been encouraging. Reports from Labrador always assure us that the money we expend in that field is not misspent.

We are glad to learn from the Secretary of our Executive Committee that our financial standing this year will be at least as good as in previous years—possibly better.

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## COLLEGE SOCIETIES.

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**A**T the regular meeting of the College Missionary Association held on the 12th inst., the following officers were elected:—Pres., R. G. Strathie, B. A.; V. P., A. F. Robb; Sec'y.-Treas., W. W. McNairn, B. A.; Ass't-Sec'y., A. D. Archibald, B. A.

At the regular meeting of the General Students, held on Nov. 8th, the following officers were elected:—Pres., R. J. Grant, M. A.; V. P., H. C. Davison, B. A.; Sec'y., D. A. Frame, B. A. W. R. Foote was elected editor in the place of W. M. Hepburn, who, we regret to say, is detained from beginning his professional studies as he anticipated, through ill health. The following appointments were also made:—L. W. Parker, Bishop; A. H. Foster, Deacon; G. E. Ross, Custodian of the Keys. References were made to the death of Mrs. D. McLean and of Rev. W. J. McKenzie, and a committee appointed to draw up suitable resolutions sympathizing with the bereaved, copies of which were ordered to be sent to them.

THE first meeting of the Theological Society was held Nov. 13th. The subject for consideration was, "How far has each denomination a right to certainty regarding its own creeds." The subject was introduced by Mr. G. A. Sutherland in an admirable paper which combined clear philosophical insight with practical common sense, two elements not usually found in conjunction. An hour was then spent in interesting discussion which, if it did not clear up all the difficulties of the question, at least served to show clearly where such difficulties lay, and to indicate some methods of solution for practical life.

THE second meeting on Nov. 20th, altho' of a different nature, was equally interesting. Mr. Geo. E. Ross read an excellent paper on, "George Elliott," in which were treated her life, intellectual and moral character, and her position as a writer. After the reading of the paper, the various points suggested were considered by the professors and students present. The moral questions were especially dwelt upon and many suggestive and helpful opinions were expressed. Altogether we feel quite safe in saying that the first two meetings of the Society have been eminently successful. In former years the presence of Professor Falconer has been a great aid, but now with the other professors also within reach we are confident that still better things are in store for the Society.

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THE CLASS OF '95.

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ONCE again the solitude is broken by the footfall of the theologian and the corridors resound to the music of his voice. But the songs of Ossian, the sweet violin strains, the eager tones of the disputant are no longer heard, and we are forced to realize, however reluctantly, that the class of '95 are forever gone. Each member of the class had a marked individuality after his kind, so that the task of calling to mind their most striking characteristics is rendered an easy one. We miss them in every sphere of college activity, but as they were men first of all we miss their fellowship most. Let us once more recall them.

ARTHUR, GEORGE was the embodiment of duty. His days were long, his nights longer. His restless spirit roamed over many fields—ancient and modern literature, science and philosophy, medicine and theology. In the night-school and the *hospital* his labors were abundant and fruitful. On occasion he could descend to the trivialities of life. He actually found time to woo and wed. At present he bears a faithful witness on the frontier at Lakesend, N. W. T., whither our best wishes follow him and his.

CRAISE, A. was a Scotchman, with the accent on the Scotch, and one had only to grip his hand to realize that "Scots wha

hae" was not altogether an extinct species. Blended with a pessimistic view of life A. C. had a fine sense of humour. When he saw the point he was "just mighty" and woe betide his victim. He has gone to labor in Mount Stewart, P. E. I. We extend congratulations and hope he will continue to maintain the honour of his country as he did among us, and we would also congratulate the good people of Mount Stewart in having secured a man "richt thro."

KIRK, J. H., was one of our most respected benedicts, and at the same time a champion of orthodoxy and order. He dwelt apart, calm and secure with his family. Nevertheless he was fully alive to College interests. In our business and prayer meetings he was always listened to with interest and profit. He was a good man and true. He no longer rocks the cradle in the cottage at Pine Hill. The Covenanters of Linden are to be congratulated on being ministered to by a man after their own heart, for whom we bespeak great and well-merited success.

McARTHUR, S. J.—here we pause to gird our loins and take a long breath before attempting the dizzy heights or the depths profound. The gentle reader will please remember that McArthur was a metaphysician, one of those who traffic in the essential, the unknowable, and the absolute. In communion with Kant, his spiritual father, and Hegel, his beloved master, his mortal vision was clarified so that he could, when in the mood, almost see into the very heart of the thing-in-itself. We miss him sorely in our class discussions. His spirit of independent enquiry that neither fear nor sloth could bribe to take anything for granted was inspiring to us all, and tended to strengthen the sinews of our minds. Whether we could always agree with him or not we ever recognized with admiration that he was no sponge, no man's man, but one who thought earnestly on his own account and made diligent search for truth. To the congregation of Bedeque we extend congratulations on securing the services of such a thoughtful student and honest man. We follow his career with interest and expectation.

McDONALD, A. D., naturally comes next. Thoughts of him and of McArthur come to us in the same throb of consciousness. In the editorial sanctum, at the table in the lower regions, in

many a stubborn conflict they were always together and always divided. McDonald was a born reformer, with broad views of life and a decided turn for practical affairs: In the bitterest combat he could never cringe nor cry "Hold." He was at home in the broad realm of English literature, and in the elaborate production of his facile pen we could trace something of the melody of Ruskin and of the vigour of Carlyle. Cheered by the comforts of his own fireside for which he in days gone by so often sighed in vain, we look for blessed results from his ministrations in the parish of Montrose.

MCRÆ, P. K., was our venerable bishop, "sober, vigilant, the husband of one wife." He magnified his office and incipient heretics lived in due terror of his name. He was powerful on the decrees and comforting on the evangel. His life among us was most exemplary and his influence for good will not soon die. He has been promoted to a wider sphere, to feed a devoted flock at Earlton where we predict for him a long lease of power and eminent usefulness.

POLLEY, J. F., noble in bearing, decisive in action, we miss from our council board. The custodian of the keys, all respected and some regarded with wholesome fear. In Hebrew he was *facile princeps*. He was well equipped, well married, well preserved, and finally well settled at Little River whither our kindest greetings follow him.

THOMPSON, A. M.,—the echoes of his silvery tones, the sparkle of his kindly eye still haunt us. Buoyant of spirit, free from the book-worm's vices, a lover of his kind, his presence was ever welcome. In response to a loud call in the early spring he tore himself away from Pine Hill and Musquodoboit, to minister to wise men in the far east. We trust he may long be spared to exercise his rare elocutionary powers before delighted audiences along the banks of the Margaree.

## COLLEGE NOTES.

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N. E. HERMAN, a Baptist student, is taking his first year in Theology in the Hall.

MR. AITKEN, the noted English Church Evangelist who holds revival services in St. Paul's Church, addressed the students on Friday afternoon. He is thoroughly evangelical, scholarly and of pleasing address. He will do much to quicken the spiritual pulse not only of his own church but of others as well. Those who have read his printed works will best understand the practical nature of his addresses.

REV. JAS. CARRUTHERS, our Lecturer on Elocution, has been appointed to a similar position in Queen's University, Kingston. We congratulate both Queens and Mr. Carruthers on the appointment.

H. S. DAVISON and Edwin Smith who have attended the past Summer Session of Manitoba College, are with us this winter. With them we also welcome R. Davidson and W. R. Foote, graduates of Mt. Allison and Acadia respectively. This year Scotland has failed to send a representative.

WE miss from our circle this session Alex. Smith and Adams Archibald. The former is continuing his theological studies at Princeton and enlivening its staid circles with his canny wit. Mr. Archibald ministers for the winter in a diocese of some fifty miles in the Andover and Tobique settlement, N. B.

THE resident students miss the genial presence of G. C. Robertson at the festal board and college societies. But our loss is his gain for in the "bosom of his family" he enjoys that *homelike feeling* for which so many of his brother Benedicts in days gone by have craved in vain. He lives with his family at *Maplewood*.

THE first meeting of the Philosophical Club was held at the residence of Prof. W. Murray on the evening of Nov. 15th. The evening was devoted to a study of Kidd's Social Evolution.



Mr. W. H. Smith read a paper summarizing the argument of the book which was followed by a critical and interesting discussion. We bespeak success for this latest arrival amongst literary circles. The membership is confined to graduates and special students in Philosophy.

JUNE brought happiness to two of our college acquaintances, Rev. Alexander Laird, B. A., of Port Hope, Ontario, and Miss Clara C. Hobrecker B. A., of this city who on the 12th day of that month were united in the holy bonds of matrimony. To the happy couple the THEOLOGUE extends congratulations and wishes for them a long life of pleasure and usefulness.

WE heartily congratulate ourselves on having with us again our esteemed Profs. Gordon and Falconer no longer on conditions or on trial. From our earliest acquaintance with them we felt that they had come to stay, and our subsequent intimacy inspires the confidence that their future work will amply justify the wisdom of the church's choice.

WE would congratulate Profs. Gordon and Falconer on this marked expression of the esteem in which their gifts are held by their fathers and brethren.

DURING the vacation the Professors' residences were completed and are now occupied. They are tasty in appearance and are built upon one of the most attractive sites in the beautiful environments of the "City by the Sea." This nearness to the Hall deducts from the drudgery of daily life of the professors and makes possible their presence at the meetings of the various societies of the college.

WE note with pleasure improvement in the college. The new furnace gives much more heat than the old and will make study possible, we believe, on the coldest day. Never were fraternal ties stronger, and there was never perhaps greater satisfaction with the surroundings. Though mind and body sometimes may weary under the increased burden of multiplied classes and societies, yet through the influence of inspiring fellowship and pleasant environment, all seems "merry as a marriage bell."

IN the October number of the *Knox College Monthly*, Prof. J. F. McCurdy writes his impressions of "A Summer School by

the Sea" He speaks in the most glowing terms of the success of the school, and it must be gratifying to those whose spirit of progressiveness led them to undertake the work to receive the recommendation of one so eminently qualified to judge. He tells of the exquisite beauty of the scenery, the excellent mental means provided, as well as the enthusiasm and love of truth displayed on every hand. While he has words of praise for all, Prof. Currie is singled out to receive a very flattering notice at his hand. We would fain quote but as we hope to insert in next issue an article from the pen of another we must forbear.

ALL our readers, no doubt, know the decision of the Synod *re* the appointment of a Synodical Evangelist. Believing that the discussions in the columns of the *THEOLOGUE*, helped at least, in keeping the subject before those who were to decide, and thus make it possible to give a more intelligent vote on the question, we hope to place before our readers this session, a discussion on other debatable subjects treated of by the Maritime Synod. We expect also to have papers dealing with subjects of interest in the everyday life of the minister.

THE death of Dr. Lawson late of Dalhousie College a few days ago cast a deep gloom over our college. To those of us who in days gone by sat under his teaching and knew him best, the sad news brought a keen sense of personal loss. The fullness and accuracy of his knowledge, and conscientious thoroughness of his teaching, the unfailing kindness which marked all his dealings with new students, coupled with the charming simplicity, the unassuming openness of his character commanded the respect and admiration of his pupils and we trust inspired them with nobler views of life.

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