

phenomena of Christianity and in his failing to pronounce upon some of the questions which enter vitally into the views held by Christians themselves. We must concede, however, the value of this rigidly scientific investigation of the phenomena and forms of religious experience, and must hail with pleasure all books of this kind as contributing in the end to the highest and best things for the world. The author says at the outset that his conclusions are not all mature or final, and that he himself would alter some of them had the investigation continued longer. This is manifest at several points in the discussion, as indicated above. There are places where he does not make perfectly clear his meaning, and other places where he has certainly not thought his problem through, and occasionally statements are made which seem to be the result of a desire to make facts conform to theories rather than to the facts themselves. For example, he says that missionaries are now learning to teach children and heathen nations religions which are adapted to their stages of growth. This sentence seems to imply that there are as many true religions as there are stages of growth among men. One is prompted to ask what these various religions are to which the author refers, and also to ask what missionaries are conforming to this program.

On the whole, the book is to be commended as a careful investigation of an exceedingly interesting department of the phenomena of religion, and all students of the subject will be greatly interested in the discussion which Dr. Moses gives us in this volume.

E. Y. MULLINS.

The Bible Doctrine of the Atonement. Six Lectures given in Westminster Abbey.

By H. C. Beeching, D.D. Litt., Canon of Westminster, and Alexander Nairne, M.A., Professor of Hebrew in King's College, London. London. John Murray, Albemarle, Street W. 1907.

This readable volume of 110 pp. consists of six lectures delivered "during Lent of 1906, on the foundation of Dame Joan Upton."

The first five are from Dr. Beeching and the sixth from Prof. Nairne. The doctrine of the atonement herein presented differs radically from the views usually held, and it seems to the reviewer that the volume bears a title which its contents do not at all justify. It rejects the legal aspect of the atonement which is considered simply an at-one-ment.

The theory of sacrifice is strangely inconsistent with the Bible doctrine. Genuine emphasis is laid on the principles and practice of righteousness, and sacrifices are rejected as forming any necessary part of the redemptive economy. "One or two of the prophets go so far as to say that He never commanded anything else"—i. e., never sacrifice, only righteous living.

"In the early days of Hebrew religion when Jehovah was regarded by the average Israelite as his national God, in much the same sense as Chemosh was the god of the Moabites—the idea of Atonement could not receive any very deep interpretation." This depends upon whether we accept the Biblical or the critical representation of sacrifice. Again, "the Atonement, therefore, to which the prophets look forward is quite independent of sacrificial rites." "As for sacrifices, they were beside the mark; they were unnecessary."

"It is clear that a theory we sometimes meet with, that in the suffering the victim represents the guilty people, will not account for these ceremonies; the sin offering was 'holy' not the reverse." But sacrifices are "allegorized" and therefore teach important lessons of the blessings of suffering patiently borne by others, e. g., the mother, the soldier, and the servant in Isa. 53.

Christ's mediatorial way of saving men was by "attracting them to himself." The prophet (Isaiah) was inspired to lay down the doctrine that no way to produce conviction of heart was so sure as that of suffering for the truth, and he was inspired to declare that this was God's foreordained plan to bring men to repentance."

"This view of an atoning efficacy in our Lord's death

—that it drew man to God in penitence” is presented as the complete Scriptural doctrine of the atonement.

Dr. Beeching rather derides the idea of attempting to ascertain what “particular mental image” was in our Lord’s mind when using the phrase, “to give his life a ransom for many.” He says it simply means “great cost” and does not indicate any theory of the atonement, though he uses it to corroborate his own views.

In brief, here is the position maintained in the lectures: “But if Christ, by carrying His love for mankind to its final consummation in death, could pour out upon mankind his own very Spirit of love which was nothing less than the very Spirit of God, would not this bind God and man together in an indissoluble covenant, within the unity of the Divine Spirit? That, indeed, is the “Atonement.”

It is strange that the learned Doctor should confuse the fruits of the Atonement with the atonement itself, and doubly strange that he should contend that Christ never took the sinners’ place under the law, never became a substitute for man but merely “put Himself under the law by the side of His people, not in their stead.” He admits that Paul “gives a somewhat penal coloring in one or two passages to his expressions about our Lord’s death,” and then asserts that we had better preach the atonement without any definite theory in mind. So he glides smoothly over the penal aspects of the work of Christ’s atoning death.

The atonement is not God-ward in any sense, only man-ward and that in order, by the highest expression of divine love to bring man to penitence, faith and good works.

The views presented throughout are on the basis of radical criticism and the evolutionary type of progressive revelation.

B. H. DEMENT.

Jesus als Charakter. Eine Untersuchung.

Von Johannes Nink. Leipzig. J. C. Hinrichs’sche Buchhandlung. 1906.