

has nothing but the warmest approval. For reactionaries of the most extreme types he knows how to account without imputing to them evil motives or thinking their influences wholly bad; for the worst forms of intolerance and dogmatism and bigotry provoked reactions that carried still further the principles of freedom and brotherhood. He rejoices greatly in the disposition of younger theologians in Germany and elsewhere to devote themselves magnanimously and enthusiastically to Christian-socialistic efforts for the well-being of the masses in the direction of education, charity, reconciliation of social classes, "in short for the Christianization of the whole life of the people and the secularization of Christianity in the Rothe's sense". He takes great satisfaction in the fact that the younger generation of theologians are not only thus widening their field of labor along these practical lines, but that "it is beginning of late to shake off the shoe-leather of the narrow dogmatism of their school-theology and unabashed to survey the broad province of general comparative science of religion". He looks forward hopefully to the achievements of Christianity in the twentieth century believing that much progress will be made in the direction of "the realization of the unity of God and man, the permeation of the entire ethical life of man with the powers of the divine Spirit of truth, freedom, love".

ALBERT HENRY NEWMAN.

The Axioms of Religion.

By E. Y. Mullins, D.D., LL.D. American Baptist Publication Society, Philadelphia, 1908. \$1.00 net, postpaid. Pages 316.

What is the distinctive message of the Baptists to the world? President Mullins replies that it is "the principle of the competency of the soul under God in religion". He thus restates the Baptist position: "The biblical significance of the Baptists is the right of private interpretation and obedience to the Scriptures. The significance of the Baptists in relation to the individual is soul freedom. The ecclesiastical significance of the Baptists is a regenerated church membership and the equality and priesthood of believers. The political significance of the Baptists is the separation of Church and State. But as

comprehending all the above particulars, as a great and aggressive force in Christian history, as distinguished from all others and standing entirely alone, the doctrine of the soul's competency in religion under God is the distinctive historical significance of the Baptists." President Mullins calls attention to the fact that the Roman Catholic system is the direct antithesis to the doctrine of the soul's competency. "In every particular of the ecclesiastical and religious life of the Roman Catholic, the soul's incapacity is assumed. All the seven sacraments illustrate the statement in a striking way." As for the Protestant churches, they are inconsistent in that they try to combine the Romish principle of incompetency with the antithetic principle of competency. "In insisting upon the doctrine of justification by faith they recognize the principle of competency; but in retaining infant baptism or episcopacy they introduce the opposite view. Infant baptism takes away from the child its privilege of individual initiative in salvation, and lodges in the hands of parents or sponsors the impossible task of performing an act of religious obedience for another."

But what are "The Axioms of Religion?" Growing out of the mother principle for which Baptists have always contended, viz., the competency of the soul in religion under God, six propositions are brought forward by President Mullins as self-evident truths:

1. The theological axiom: The holy and loving God has a right to be sovereign.
2. The religious axiom: All souls have an equal right to direct access to God.
3. The ecclesiastical axiom: All believers have a right to equal privileges in the church.
4. The moral axiom: To be responsible man must be free.
5. The religio-civic axiom: A free Church in a free State.
6. The social axiom: Love your neighbor as yourself.

It may be well to let our author explain what he means by the word axiom. "In calling the above statements axioms the intelligent reader will understand that I do not employ the word in its strict mathematical sense. The truths set forth,

however, are in the moral and religious sphere what axioms are in mathematics. That is to say, when the meaning of the various terms is clearly grasped there will be no protest or objection in the reader's mind. I make bold to say that in America no member of any of those churches known as 'evangelical' will dissent from any of the principles enunciated in this list of six axioms. Indeed, it is believed that the great multitude of unbelievers—men who reject Christianity as held by the evangelical bodies, but who are theists, believers in a personal God to whom man is responsible, will also admit these axioms. I do not, of course, suppose that all Roman Catholics will yield assent to these propositions save in a most abstract and general way. Romanism forbids more. Such of them as grasp clearly the principles of Romanism will combat them just as they do the whole Protestant standpoint of the right of private judgment in religion. Romanism, against the whole modern view of man, assumes the incompetency of the soul in religion. Doubtless also those in European countries who are wedded to the theory of a union of Church and State will repudiate the religio-civic axiom. But the cases of the Romanist and of the man who favors a religious establishment may for the purpose of our discussion be treated as exceptional. On the other hand, it may be asserted freely that the religious and intellectual growth of the great Protestant world since the Reformation has been such that, with the qualifications just made, the six axioms will meet with a hearty and favorable response."

In his discussion of the various axioms of religion President Mullins holds the reader's interest to the end. In his hands the doctrine of election is no longer an arbitrary or capricious thing. "It is infinite wisdom, grace, and skill, seeking to save the world by the method which will reach the greatest number in the shortest time. This explains the fact that election is a widening process. From generation to generation the horizon broadens and increasing numbers enter the kingdom. Holiness thus vindicates itself in that God refuses to violate man's moral nature, even in order to save him; and love vindicates itself

in that the process of saving men is accelerated as much as possible at every stage."

In discussing the doctrine that all men have an equal right to direct access to God, Dr. Mullins properly devotes much space to infant baptism as a contradiction of the religious axiom. He shows the hopeless contradictions in the views of evangelical Protestant churches. In replying to the plea that infant baptism is necessary to Christian-nurture, he well says: "Every parental duty in the matter of religious teaching and training is possible without the use of a rite which anticipates and forestalls personal action, robs the child of the joy of conscious obedience to Christ in his own appointed ordinance; in short, which does despite and violence to individuality and personality, the choicest gift of God to our children, and that which we should above all things protect and conserve."

Inasmuch as all men have an equal right to direct access to God, they are entitled to equal privileges in the church. In the church Christ is absolute monarch and all believers are brethren. Dr. Mullins rightly insists that there is no indirect lordship known to the New Testament. "An ecclesiastical monarchy with a human head, like the Roman Catholic Church, radically alters the very nature of Christianity. Baptist congregationalism is the exact antithesis of the Roman hierarchy. Modified ecclesiastical monarchies, or aristocracies, or oligarchies, are less objectionable, but they, too, violate one or the other of the organic laws of the church, the direct lordship of Christ, or the equality of all believers in spiritual privilege." Dr. Mullins rightly insists that the church should be an organism rather than a mechanism. He is fully persuaded that all departures from the simple democratic church polity of New Testament times have been mistakes. He believes that a religious democracy can provide itself with adequate equipment for its spiritual tasks.

In discussing human freedom our author is quite at home in philosophy as well as in exegesis. He boldly champions the cause of freedom against materialism and undue exaltation of heredity. His description of human freedom is well worth

quoting: "Now freedom is self-determination. Of course, it does not mean that the will is without bias, or that human choices are uninfluenced by external forces or other human personalities, or by divine influences of grace. It only means that when a man acts he acts for himself. The choice is his own. He is not compelled but impelled. He is self-determined. This is the core of manhood and personality. This is the inner glory of our being. It is the one spark of fire which kindles about our humanity its unique splendor." The author regards infant baptism as an interference with the religious experience of a child: "To baptize a child in infancy is to treat it not at a free moral personality, but as a thing." Infant baptism assumes that Christ demands from the soul what the soul cannot give. For there are thousands of infants left without baptism, and when the child of the Christian parent dies without it, it leaves a heartbreak which no church has a right to inflict by such teaching."

President Mullins devotes a special chapter to Christian nurture. He shows that the Baptist view is in perfect accord with the best modern pedagogical theory; for, as he tells us, "the best pedagogy ever respects personality, seeks to call forth the latent powers of the soul, and jealously guards the nature of the child from premature forcing." "Infant baptism is like requiring the mastery of algebraic symbols before the boy has learned the multiplication table." How may we know that a child has been converted? Dr. Mullins says there are two marks of this great experience: "These two elements—the Christian motive and the Christian struggle—when they appear as permanent in the child's life, are sure indications that Christ has come into that life." Our author is an enthusiastic advocate of Christian nurture in the home. The child should be surrounded with every incentive to holy living, and be led to a complete acceptance of Jesus as Lord and Savior in early youth. "There is no higher task for angels or men than to teach a little child to pray."

President Mullins remarks that a new era in man's spiritual history began when Roger Williams founded the common-

wealth of Rhode Island. He shows that Baptists both in creed and life have been the consistent advocates of a free church in a free state. Baptists have always stood for religious liberty and not merely religious toleration. True to their doctrine of the separation of Church and State, they today oppose the appropriation of public money for sectarian schools, and the enforced reading of the Bible in the public schools. As to the exemption of church property from taxation, the author states the argument pro and con with clearness, and remarks: "Up to the present it cannot be said that time has demonstrated the unwisdom of exempting religious property from taxation."

President Mullins holds firmly that Christian men cannot keep aloof from public questions and public service. The moral and evangelistic impulse makes the true believer an aggressive advocate of a saving gospel and of all morality and social righteousness. "The church is the dynamo whose task it is to charge all departments of life with righteousness." The advantage of a democratic church polity is that it leaves men free to cast their lives and influence into the complex and manifold affairs of the State, and in all great movements for the moral and spiritual improvement of society.

In treating of "Baptists and General Organization", Dr. Mullins shows that the voluntary principle must control, the representative principle in the strict sense being excluded by our general position. Up to this time Baptists have been wise enough to avoid the evils of delegated authority. As our author remarks, "Papal infallibility is the inevitable logic of all forms of religious authority." He deprecates the suggestion occasionally thrown out that Baptists ought to have a more centralized polity.

In discussing Christian Union President Mullins calls attention to the vantage ground held by Baptists. Our people have eschewed the tendency to incorporate new features into the simple New Testament polity, and put the emphasis in their teaching and life on the great principles which our author has stated as axioms. Real Christian union cannot be secured by

manipulation, but rather by a general acceptance of the fundamental teachings of the New Testament. "We must learn to think God's thoughts after him as revealed in Christ if we are to find the clew to unity."

In a special chapter on Institutional Christianity Dr. Mullins handles with ability the plea for "open membership". He shows how persons who advocate the admission of members into the church without baptism not only overlook the many Scriptures which show that church members in New Testament times were baptized persons, but also predicate their teaching on the false assumption that baptism as a required condition of church membership interferes in some way with Christian liberty. To discard all institutional forms, which some extremists advocate, would leave the community of believers, so to speak, gasping in a vacuum.

The address delivered at the Baptist Convention of North America, held at Jamestown, Va., May, 1907, on "The Contribution of the Baptists to American Civilization", appears almost word for word as it was delivered. The style is free and flowing, and sallies of wit and humor light up the address.

The closing chapter of the book is entitled "Baptists and World Progress." If Baptists have done so much for civilization in America, the question naturally arises: Do the axioms of religion as expounded by President Mullins contain in themselves sufficient virtue to guide the destinies of the race? Do they partake of the nature of *principia*, or first principles of advancing civilization? Our author shows how these axioms will work in the religious world, in the realm of the intellectual life, and as a social and political force in the world's progress. Dangers and difficulties described by some of the leaders of religious thought would disappear before the spread of the axiomatic principles expounded by our author. Dr. Mullins shows how the educational process of the centuries culminates in the axioms of religion. The best educational method of our time is in perfect accord with these axioms. Science and Philosophy are moving in the same direction. Moreover, the extremes of Socialism will break upon these axioms. Whatever

is good and true in this great modern movement will be found to accord with these axioms.

President Mullins is a master in clean-cut definitions and felicitous illustrations. His style is so prespicuous that it is almost impossible to misunderstand him. His spirit is irenic, but he makes no compromise with error. He is always fair to an opponent, stating his position clearly and fully. He is often eloquent, but without the slightest suspicion of an attempt to be so. He is particularly happy and gifted in the department of Apologetics. In his former work entitled "Why is Christianity True?" he made a notable contribution to the defense of our common Christianity against all forms of modern attack. In the present work he offers to his Baptist brethren throughout the world the most notable statement and defense of the foundations of their faith. The book ought to go into every Baptist home in the English-speaking world.

JOHN R. SAMPEY.

VII. MISCELLANEOUS.

The Magic Wand.

By Tudor Jenks. Illustrations by John R. Neill. Henry Altemus Company, Philadelphia.

This little book contains three short stories: *The Magic Wand*, *The Sultan's Verses* and *The Boy and Dragon*. All will be found bright and interesting for children, and the *Sultan's Verses* contains a fine moral lesson. I. M. M.

The Iliad for Boys and Girls. Told from Homer in Simple Language.

By the Rev. Alfred J. Church, M. A. With twelve illustrations in color. The Macmillan Company. New York. 1907. Pages 302.

I confess that I am boy enough to have enjoyed this condensation of Homer more than the text itself. To be sure one who has read Homer before will fill in a deal here and there. But Mr. Church has preserved the spirit and power of the story with surpassing skill. The very brevity gives concentrated power. The wonderful vividness of Homer is here reproduced. It is hard to think how a boy or girl could have a better intro-