

gated—the gross facts and features of a personality that normal men must ever deplore. “The Charm of Nietzsche” has to be recognized. This is the title to one of the lectures, wherein the man’s fascination is strikingly well analyzed. But that “charm” is not one that ought to be burnished by brilliant praise of features first detached from their original and then combined into a scintillating assemblage of attractive principles.

It is well to take refuge in Nietzsche’s insanity to condone the element of personal iniquity in the use he made of his strikingly brilliant powers, but that insanity cannot make good and noble that which is corrupt and baneful.

Dr. Figgis has given us a volume in which Nietzsche appears at his best and yet remains, one must think, repulsive to any who are not blinded by a strange enthusiasm for unbridled daring. Nietzsche openly rejected and ridiculed the teachings of Christ, and yet consciously sought to fulfill the New Testament prediction of Anti-Christ, a role for which he was too small, but in which he contributed largely to that abandon of Christianity, morality and humanity that have produced and characterized the Germanic war on civilization.

W. O. CARVER.

**The Christian Religion in Its Doctrinal Expression.** By E. Y. Mullins, D.D., LL.D., President and Professor of Theology, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. Published by The American Baptist Publication Society and the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Under the above title Dr. Mullins gives us a system of theology. I came to the reading of this book with great eagerness. The fact that I had been a student of the author gave me interest in the book. Knowing that the book was forth-coming, I had been planning to introduce it as a text-book when it should be published. Expecting thus to live with the book for some years to come, I was naturally eager to make its acquaintance.

I expected much from a book that was to come from the pen of Dr. Mullins. The book comes fully up to my expectations. His treatment of the doctrines of Christianity is eminently satis-

factory. The author refuses to cast aside the great doctrines of Christianity at the demand of certain misguided philosophers and "sectarian scientists." With a rare power of spiritual insight, he sets forth in an illuminating way these great doctrines. In this book Dr. Mullins lives up to his well-deserved reputation for putting great thoughts in clear language.

In more than one sense it is a book of religion. It deals with the Christian religion. It views theology as the interpretation of religion. It deals with the subject in a religious way. It helps one's religion to read it. The author emphasizes the work of the Holy Spirit in spiritual experiences. At the same time, the book deals with the profoundest things of religion and theology, and deals with them in a profound way.

I think the most significant feature of the book, as compared with the older theologies, is the way the author deals with the question of religious knowledge. He does not look upon religious knowledge as a result of speculative reasoning or logical deduction. It is a matter of experience. God reveals himself to man in spiritual experience. Spiritual experience gives one a direct, first-hand knowledge of God. It is not knowledge about God, but direct acquaintance with God. This gives, not a form of speculation, but religious certainty.

Nor does this disregard the objective revelation of God in Christ as recorded in the Bible. This historical personal revelation is made primary and determinative, but it is interpreted in the light of Christian experience. Making this historical revelation of God in Christ, as recorded in the New Testament and interpreted in the light of Christian experience, the center, the author works out a consistent interpretation of the Christian religion.

This method of dealing with the question of religious knowledge has important consequences. Nowhere is this more evident than in the doctrine of God. The old method was to "prove" the existence of God by certain abstract arguments, using the facts of nature and "natural religion" as the data for the argument. But the God which this method gave was far away and unreal. Sometimes He was little more than an abstract, in-

finite principle. Then when you came later on to the Christian revelation you got practically another God. Dr. Mullins begins with the facts of the Christian revelation. He does not disregard the arguments for God's existence nor the light of nature. But those are made secondary. The author's method brings you at once to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, not an abstract Infinite.

In this way the Christian revelation, with the view of the world implied therein, is made to stand primarily on its own merits. Theology is not made to depend on a system of philosophy which was worked out independently of the facts of Christianity. This is a great gain to both theology and religion. It means their emancipation from a servile dependence on a cold, abstract intellectualism. In the realm of theology it means the difference between a body of truth with the life-blood of vital religion coursing through its veins, and a cold, dead statue, beautiful perhaps, but lifeless nevertheless. In this book you hear the natural voice of religion herself as she speaks her message of truth. In some other theologies you hear only the metallic echo of that voice as it is reproduced by the graphophone of a system of abstract philosophy.

This does not mean that the author is not at home in the realm of philosophical thought, nor that he has no consistent philosophical interpretation of the world. He is perfectly at home in the field of philosophy, as his discussion shows. In fact, he knows the tricks of philosophical thought too well to make the truth of Christianity dependent on an abstract philosophy. The philosophical standpoint of the author, so far as it is stated, is that of personalism. He believes that the universe must be interpreted from the standpoint of personality, or we have no interpretation at all.

In harmony with this he emphasizes the doctrine of the incarnation as the revelation of a personal God. The incarnation also reveals the inherent worth and dignity of man and the spiritual capacities of human nature. The author never loses sight of the freedom of man. He emphasizes the fact that God always deals with man as a person and not a thing. In saving

man God must win man's response by moral suasion, not force his will by the exercise of sheer omnipotence.

Hence the author's Calvinism is of a mild type. He recognizes the sovereignty of God and God's initiative in salvation. But these truths are held in view of the other truths just stated—man's personality and freedom.

This suggests another quality of this book, as of all Dr. Mullins' works. He has a remarkable power of seeing all sides of a question. And when he speaks on a question, it is usually a well-balanced statement that he makes. Nowhere is this quality of his more in evidence than in this work.

Also it seems to me that, more perhaps than any other man in my knowledge, has Dr. Mullins been able to appropriate all that is good in current theological, philosophical and scientific discussions and reject what is false. He has the power of discerning what is good in a system of thought and bringing it to clear statement, and also of seeing and refusing the erroneous.

The theology of this book is Biblical in character and method. Instead, however, of using detached proof texts, selected at random from any part of the Bible irrespective of the historical connection and the place of the text in the development of revelation, the author uses the method of Biblical Theology in stating the different doctrines. In this way one gets a better conception of the doctrines presented and a better conception of the Bible. We get a view of the Bible as an organic whole. Revelation is seen as something progressive and historical, moving to a climax in the work of Christ. The great doctrines of the Bible are seen both in their historical development and in their completeness.

While the book is intended as a system of Christian doctrine, the method followed has made it also a valuable treatise in apologetics. By emphasizing the fact basis of Christianity, by analyzing the fundamental facts of Christianity into a consistent world-view, the author has given a treatise valuable both for purposes of defense and for propagation of Christian truth.

I would be glad to discuss the author's treatment of some particular doctrines if space allowed. I will only indicate, in closing, the general line of thought followed. In the first chap-

ter he discusses the relation of theology and religion. Then he takes up the question of knowledge, especially religious knowledge. This is discussed in relation to Christian experience, to other forms of knowledge, to the record of revelation in the Bible, to Christ as the supreme revelation of God. Then the Deity of Christ, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and the Trinity and the doctrine of God are discussed. Then follows the discussion of creation, providence and sin. Then we have the saving work of Christ, election, the doctrine of salvation, followed by the doctrine of last things. There is at the first a valuable analytical table of contents, and a useful bibliography at the close.

This book is undoubtedly a valuable contribution to American theological literature. It will probably take its place along with Dr. Broadus' *Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* and Dr. Robertson's *Greek Grammar* as a standard work. It is a book that every preacher ought to study carefully. While it is intended as a text-book in theology, it is more than that. It is a readable book and ought to have a wide circulation.

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**American Poets and Their Theology.** By A. H. Strong. Griffith & Rowland Press, Philadelphia, 1916. 485 pp. \$1.00 net.

For the man who enjoys poetry and the interpretation of poetry, and especially for the man who enjoys the higher teachings of the greater poets, this volume will come freighted with good things. Dr. Strong's previous volume, "The Great Poets and Their Theology," which is known to a great circle of readers, will have prepared the way for the present volume which deals with American poets. Bryant, Emerson, Whittier, Poe, Longfellow, Lowell, Holmes, Lanier, and Whitman are the names included.

It is not possible to give an adequate conception of Dr. Strong's vigorous analysis and criticism in his discussions of our American poets. The chapters are all characterized by insight and appreciation of poetic genius coupled with unsparing exposure of moral weakness and approval of moral excellence. This