

idea in Jewish categories and in close relation to the history. The main body of the church was finally driven, by dangers within and without, to a type of doctrine in which the Pauline and Petrine gospels were harmonized. The first great eirenicon of this kind is I Peter, and the process has its final outcome in the Fourth Gospel, which is essentially Pauline, though thrown into the Aramaic form of a life of Jesus.

This hurried outline does scant justice to Dr. Bacon's book, which is emphatically the work of a rich mind, continually raising new questions and throwing out fresh ideas. These incidental suggestions, which Dr. Bacon scatters in such profusion, are perhaps the most valuable part of the book. The main thesis lies open to many serious criticisms (e.g., the fundamental significance of the two Sacraments, the interpretation of the death of Jesus, the neglect of some cardinal elements in the thought of Paul, the Pauline character of Mark, the exaggerated emphasis on the Paulinism of the Fourth Gospel). It is impossible in a short notice even to touch on the many debatable questions which are started by the book, and which will doubtless occupy New Testament scholars for a long time to come. But the book is all the more valuable because it is so provocative. Whether Dr. Bacon's positions will finally be accepted or not he has certainly put New Testament inquiry on a number of fresh tracks and made old problems more living.

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WHAT SHALL PROTESTANTISM DO WITH MODERNISM?

When Pope Pius X in 1907 published his famous encyclical letter condemning modernism, a battle royal was on in the field of theology. In Catholicism, however, the battle was brief and decisive. The church officially laid down the rules by which a victory must be judged. No one could claim the right to represent Catholicism who did not accept and defend the faith once delivered to the saints and conserved in the official doctrines of the church. On this basis, there could be only one outcome. Modernism was outlawed.

The same theological issue is now acute in Protestantism. But Protestantism, having repudiated the jurisdiction of an official church, and having staked its cause on the free consent of every individual to the faith which saves, is unable to employ the short and easy course open to the Church of Rome. In the last analysis public opinion must decide the issue. Hence the battle in Protestantism inevitably takes the form of propaganda to influence public opinion among church members. This means that we are face to face with a lively period of

controversial religious literature. If the controversy is carried on with an intelligent definition of issues so that genuine debate is possible it ought to result in great good to the cause of religion. But there is grave danger that, owing to misstatements, heat rather than light may be engendered. Two books recently from the press dealing with modernism are here reviewed in the hope of making clear some aspects of the real issue and thus aiding toward a fruitful rather than a fruitless debate.¹

Dr. Horsch's book is an excellent Protestant counterpart of the papal encyclical. At the outset he makes a definition of the true Christianity by which all must be judged. He defends it as true because he is sure it is revealed in the Bible, and thus has divine sanction. He then proceeds to show by copious citations that the "liberalistic" theologians reject or deny the important items in his system. That these same liberals after the mask is thus stripped off should have the effrontery to persist in claiming the privilege of exercising religious leadership in Christian churches is intolerable. The book is marked by an earnest spirit, and the author has evidently endeavored to pile up the evidence in scholarly and dignified form. As he presents it, it is well calculated to make a profound impression, even if it does not persuade all readers that "the new theology discredits and destroys the foundations of Christianity as Christianity has been known in all ages from the time of its origin."

Impressive as is the apparent mass of evidence furnished in this book, the modernist who reads it will feel that he has not had his case really presented at all. Isolated sentences may be skilfully used so as to create an impression which would never be suggested by the same words in their context. Indeed, such quotation with intent to prove a preconceived point easily leads an author into misquotation. For example, Horsch cites President McGiffert as saying: "Christ is essentially no more divine than we are or than nature is." In the original from which this is taken, McGiffert is simply setting forth historically the position of Schleiermacher. The entire passage reads: "The deity of Christ [according to Schleiermacher] resides in the completeness of his consciousness of God. . . . Essentially Christ is no more divine than we are or than nature is. But he knows his oneness with God: he is fully awake to his own divinity; and his life is completely controlled by his realization of it. *He is therefore divine in a sense which nature*

¹ *Modern Religious Liberalism: The Destructiveness and Irrationality of the New Theology*. By John Horsch. Scottsdale, Pa.: Fundamental Truth Depot, 1921. 331 pages.

Modernism and the Christian Faith. By John Alfred Faulkner. New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1921. 306 pages. \$2.75.

cannot be and in a sense which we are not yet but hope eventually to become." [Italics mine.] One or two instances have been noted by the reviewer where Dr. Horsch apparently substituted his own notes for exact quotation. And this in spite of an evident intention on his part to be scrupulously objective in his citations. It only shows how impossible it is for one with a polemic purpose to give a fair picture of his opponent's real position. Little phrases and interpretative comments turn the original statement into the damaging kind of evidence which the author is looking for. The consequence is that the actual ideas of the opponent do not come to light in their original setting. All that the reader of this book will learn concerning modernism is that it consists of denials either direct or implied of what the author considers fundamentals. That the modernist also has his positive faith which is dear to him and which is the expression of an uplifting religious life never appears. Dr. Horsch quotes repeatedly from liberals who generously, sometimes even wistfully, recognize the strength of orthodox loyalty, and engage in earnest soul-searching of themselves. But he is himself so sure of his own position that he never dreams of the possibility that it may be open to criticism. He sits in judgment on the modernists and is painfully oblivious of the reasons why his system fails to satisfy numbers of Christian men as devoted and as earnest as he is. It is this which makes the modernist feel the futility of even attempting to answer his arguments. Like the Roman church he has so defined the test of truth that no one can be right unless he agrees with the system authoritatively laid down.

Professor Faulkner adopts a very different attitude. He recognizes that if men are unable to accept the traditional doctrines it must be because those doctrines have been so presented as to fail to carry conviction. He is not so naïve as to suppose that doctrines can be reinstated in one's confidence by telling the doubter that the authority of the church or of the Bible requires him to assent. The only way in which to secure real belief is to show that a doctrine is inherently believable. His book consists of a series of discussions dealing with the crucial doctrines in debate between conservatives and radicals. In every case he simply attempts in straightforward fashion to show why the conservative position seems to him more reasonable and more defensible than the alternate. The discussions are stimulating and are calculated to challenge real thinking and criticism. This is precisely the kind of debate which is needed, and the volume is to be welcomed as a wholesome contribution. A large portion of the book is devoted to a detailed amassing of historical testimony as to the nature of Jesus Christ. Here are objective data for a profitable discussion.

The shrewd modernist, however, will wish some points to be cleared up a little further. For example, Dr. Faulkner defends the conception of authority. But what is the content of the authority which he so persuasively expounds? The child's confidence in his parents; the inexorable rule of the order of nature over our life; the restrictions of civil law; the inhibitions and sanctions of social custom; and in the religious realm analogous forms of control. The real question, however, is as to how far the individual may criticize and modify the inherited social sanctions. In no case can he ignore or utterly defy them. Dr. Faulkner opens the way for fruitful discussion here, but he does not really further it because he has cleverly retained a word—*authority*—while giving it a content which might readily disconcert many a conservative. As a matter of fact he is just as eager as any modernist to commend his doctrine on its own merits rather than on the basis of any extraneous authority. In the process, however, some familiar terms are so defined as to make one wonder if a genuine conservative will not feel that the cause has been betrayed. An instance or two will illustrate. "What is meant by the infallibility of the Scripture, then, is that when discovered by scientific exegesis its teachings on faith and morals in its general drift and spiritual implications and essence, are truth and not error." It would be hard to find anyone who really knows the Bible who would deny this. But is it what is ordinarily meant by infallibility? "A miracle is any deed in an order which is impossible to the forces ordinarily working in that order. Crystallization—at least perfect crystallization—is not a miracle in quartz; but it is a miracle in sandstone. . . . It is a question whether genius is not another name for miracle. . . . In other words the special literary and intellectual powers behind *Hamlet* were such as God has never embodied and never will embody in another human soul. That is, to ordinary mortals, Shakespeare was a miracle." Again, who will object to this? But is it what is ordinarily meant by miracle? There is more modernism concealed under the familiar labels than one would expect from an avowed opponent of radical liberalism. All this only shows that when in a spirit of sweet reasonableness men debate issues, it is possible for each side to retain the vocabulary which seems most appropriate to arouse religious devotion, and yet to center attention on convincing content rather than on charges of heresy and demands for resignations. It is to be hoped, for the sake of the spiritual welfare of the church, that the method and attitude of Dr. Faulkner rather than that of Dr. Horsch may prevail.

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