

Irish Church Quarterly

Immortality by E. E. Holmes

Review by: F. C. L.

The Irish Church Quarterly, Vol. 3, No. 10 (Apr., 1910), pp. 174-175

Published by: [Irish Church Quarterly](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30026498>

Accessed: 12/06/2014 18:35

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Irish Church Quarterly is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Irish Church Quarterly*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

had no meaning for them ; God was desired for His own sake, and realized through direct spiritual intercourse.

Although Dr. Burney's conclusions respecting the testimony of the Book of Wisdom are open to question, it is needless to press the point in a book that contains so much that is admirable. He rightly allows considerable space to the witness of non-canonical literature. The little-known period between the two canons was one of rapid development and perhaps no conception developed more markedly than the hope of immortality.

J. A. F. G.

IMMORTALITY. By Rev. E. E. Holmes, Hon. Canon of Christ Church, Oxford. (Oxford Library of Practical Theology). (Longmans.) 5s. net.

This book is evidently the fruit of wide reading ; and a glance over the table of contents shows that in intention and design it should be well calculated to take its place in this series. And yet the impression left is, on the whole, one of dissatisfaction ; though here and there the author rises above the level of the rest of the book. He has indeed read widely enough, but assimilated narrowly. The abundance of quotation makes the book read at times almost like an anthology ; which suggests—we may be wrong—that the author spent so much time in collecting material that he had not enough time to pass it through the mill of his own mind, but has simply given us as it were lumps of raw material. We do not quarrel with him because (as he confesses in the preface), " I have borrowed my honey, if it be honey, from other hives " ; in other words, because he has learnt from other and often greater men than himself ; but because he has not always (one feels) made those thoughts of others *his own* before passing them on to us.

Exceptio probat regulam. This criticism derives weight from the fact that what appears to us decidedly the best chapter in the book—chapter viii., " The Pain of Paradise,"—also contains a much lower proportion of quotation than most of the book. Here Canon Holmes writes like one who has not only read but thought upon the subject, one who speaks not altogether from hearsay but (as far as anyone may) from knowledge. And yet—we cannot resist the temptation of asking—why should being Prime Minister of England make a man an authority on the future life (p. 118)? It is only in a footnote that we learn that the Prime Minister in question happened to be Mr. Gladstone. Were we in doubt as to whether the Christian dead are in a progressive state, we might be strengthened in the belief by the opinion of Mr. Gladstone the Christian, the Churchman, the scholar ;

but it would not be hard to find some to whom the witness of Mr. Gladstone, the "late Prime Minister of England," brought no sense of assurance.

F. C. L.

THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF GOD. By W. N. Clarke, D.D. (T. and T. Clark.) 10s. 6d.

This is an able and interesting work on an all-important subject by an author who has already won distinction through his previous writings. Its method differs from that of most of the leading works on Theism, and this difference is more than once emphasized by its author. The main purpose of this book, he tells us, is not to prove, but to present the Christian doctrine of God. The latter method Dr. Clarke condemns as quite contrary to the Christian idea. The Christian way is the way of recognition rather than of demonstration. Not *that* God is, but *what* God is, is the first point in the Christian doctrine.

In accordance with this announcement he devotes the greater part of the volume to developing what he regards as the Christian doctrine of God, and it is not till near the close that he takes up the question of the evidence, and of what he calls "the great objection." There are sections in this book devoted to the "character" of God, His personality, His character, His goodness; then He is considered as Creator, as Father, as Sovereign, as Moral Governor, as Providence, as Saviour. There follows a short section on the Trinity; one on "God in human life"; and then sections on Monotheism, on the two Units of Existence; the Eternal, the Infinite; on Transcendence and Immanence, Omniscience and Omnipotence.

It is not until these sections have been passed that, at the close of the book, we come at last to the evidence. That evidence is classified as Evidence from the Rational, and Evidence from the Spiritual. Our author begins by asking the question, "When came the rational in man? By what kind of process did man come to be the rational being that he is?" Here he unreservedly adopts the philosophy of Darwinism, though he does not mention Darwin's name.

"The rational nature of man was not instantaneously created: it was developed in the developing of the world. Probably the very beginning of life was the beginning of sensation. Sensation brings experience of pleasure and pain, and pleasure and pain are enough to render life rational. Pain and pleasure do not long exist uncomparated; judgement between them arises, choice follows, and effort is the result. . . The rational within meets the rational without and recognizes it."