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W. J. MC GLOTHLIN.

## VII. APOLOGETICS.

### **Why is Christianity True.**

By E. Y. Mullins, D.D., LL. D., President of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky. Chicago. Christian Culture Press. Pp. 450.

The sub-title of this book is "Christian Evidences," indicating its character as an apologetic. The volume forms the third issue in the Advanced Christian Culture Courses of the Baptist Young Peoples' Union of America. It is provided with a full Table of Contents, which should not be neglected in reading the volume, and at the end are placed valuable lists of books referred to in the argument and of other works bearing upon the subject.

President Mullins has done a good work in preparing this book, which should be an armory for the young Christian in the defense of his faith. The argument for Christian belief is stated from four leading points of view: The evidence from nature; The evidence from Jesus; The evidence from Christian experience; The evidence from Christian history. In a well balanced discussion these points are argued with such fairness and such recognition of all the light which modern research and the latest thought have thrown upon the subject, that the mind of the reader is not prejudiced and disaffected by

the special pleading which is too often the resort of apologists. The author candidly states what seem to him to be the difficulties in the way of belief, answers them dispassionately, and builds safely upon foundations which are cleared of all rubbish. The reader, especially if he is young and in need of the clearest and simplest method of statement and argument, will find himself under the guidance of a thorough student, as well as an accomplished man of the world, who has had wide experience in the training of men, and knows the difficulties which the mind meets in the problems of Christianity. The combination of evident scholarship with this human and broad interest in the common needs of the mind as it approaches the difficulties of faith, gives the book an advantage to, be coveted by more abstruse discussions and makes it a peculiarly fit aid to those, for whom it is published. It is a sane book, and a welcome addition to our resources for the strengthening of our own intellectual positions and for the instruction of beginners in Christian study.

Part I. treats of the Christian view of the World, and in six chapters the cumulative argument leads on to a statement of the theistic position as alone sufficient to satisfy the reason. As a mere matter of order, one might question whether the first chapter might not better be placed by itself as introductory, since it gives a general survey of modern Christian evidences, not presenting any of the conflicting claims in detail, but leading up to their consideration in the chapters that follow. The chapter covers in brief the whole argument of the four Parts and should not be included in Part I, as it is introductory to the four parts taken as a whole. Chapter II. begins the real discussion of Part I and shows the position of pantheism, incidentally indicating the danger of confounding pantheism with the monistic philosophy. Materialism and Agnosticism are treated in the following chapters, and Evolution is then discussed leading to a consideration of Theism as the satisfying hypothesis for the ex-

planation of the phenomena of the physical universe. The chapter upon Theism is a lucid and forcible statement of the evidence from the personality in man in addition to that afforded by impersonal nature.

In Part II the author comes to what, in our view, is the *crux* of the whole subject of Christian evidence. Christ, —what he was, what he taught, what forces he set in motion—will ever be the greatest witness to God and to a God of such a character as may claim intellectual and spiritual allegiance. If facts can be proved to lie at the basis of the Christian faith so far as the life of Christ is concerned, and if the development of Christian doctrine and morals under the immediate influence of Jesus, or closest to his time and teaching, shows a satisfying consistency with his life, then the Christian religion, stripped of everything that is adventitious, may well be received as the interpretation of man's relation to God. It is right to point out, as the author does, that we are not to separate the discussion of miracles as they are related to Jesus from the facts of the nature and life of Jesus Himself. "To consider miracles and the supernatural in the abstract is one thing. To consider them in relation to the Person of Christ is quite another." It would be as absurd to argue that all miracles must be impossible, in all conditions, and so conclude that a supernatural and unique being like Christ could not exist and that he could not be taken as a witness to God, as it would be to conclude upon *a priori* grounds that the sea never could have flowed over the highest land and so discredit the existence of sea-shells upon the top of a given mountain. Go to the mountain top and see the shells. Then look for their explanation in whatever physical event in the past may be found adequate. Christianity does not ask a belief in miracles in general nor does it ask credence for Christ upon the direct force of miracles that he performed. No miracle proved Christ to be divine, any more than the miracles ascribed to Moses prove him to have been divine. The witness of the miracle to Christ is indirect

and absolutely without force and incredible, if it be discussed apart from the nature of Christ and the life and purposes of Christ. The miracle in its relation to Christ occupied exactly the same place as the miracle ascribed to Moses, or Elijah, or Peter. It was a side evidence of the claim made; it was the indication that such power would never be vouchsafed to any messenger not from God. It had its place in showing the men of the time that to discredit the doer was to discredit God. But Christ should have been believed without miracle and wholly upon the evidence of Himself, his own evident character. But with such facts as are given us in the life of Christ, even the miracle becomes consistent with him, and all the other aspects of his life appear possible to reason and to faith. The great question is as to the facts of the life of Jesus. The writer therefore rightly considers first the facts, presented in the Synoptic Gospels, and finds in his moral nature, in his sinlessness, in his relation to the great fact of sin in the race, in his unquestioned redemptive power, in his teachings of his Kingdom, such a being as only a unique explanation can account for. Christ is presented not as one who must be received because the story of the virgin birth, or the narrative of the resurrection are beyond question. Christ must be received upon the manifest divine qualities which are his, and then such a wonder of birth, or death, or resurrection is found consistent with his very being. A divine unity appears in the narratives, and the miraculous itself becomes an element rather to be expected than to be thrown aside as beyond belief. This principle of unity is rightly insisted upon in every part of the argument, and it is the stronghold of the Christian faith. In every phase of Christian truth the same test is applicable, and the whole case may be put in a sentence: "The case for Christianity is won or lost according as Jesus Christ stands or falls." Even in the consideration of the other writings of the New Testament the principle of unity prevails, and it is not only in the Synoptics that the facts of the life of

Jesus are to be discerned, but in the pre-gospel writings of Paul; and in the late books of testimony to him, who had been seen and known by the writers, are the consistent accounts of what Jesus was and what was the fullness and the unity of his truth.

The evidence from the Christian experience, Part III, presents a valuable array of testimonies and they are studied in the light of the best modern thought and mental science. A will surrendered to God as interpreted through Christ leads not only to new, but to the best ethical ideals and to spiritual and moral satisfaction. The analysis of Christian experience is brought to the test of facts, both in personal life and in history, which can no more be denied or ignored in the argument, than the sun or the stars can be denied. Incidental to the verification offered in experience and history, a study of other religions and the power of Christian Missions is valuable. Christianity is the total answer to man's religious need, is the conclusion of the whole argument, and the reader lays down the book with the feeling that faith is reasonable, and that the intellectual, as well as the moral and religious nature of man may rest in the Christian truth.

GEORGE E. MERRILL.

### **The Bible, Its Origin and Nature.**

By Marcus Dods, D.D., New College, Edinburgh. Charles Scribner's Sons. New York. 1905.

The seven lectures that here appear in book form were delivered before Lake Forrest College, Illinois, on the foundation of the late William Bross, late Lieutenant Governor of Illinois.

President Patton, of Princeton, delivered the first course on the foundation in 1903, and Professor Dods followed with this course in 1904. The subjects dealt with are *The Bible and Other Learned Books*, *The Canon of Scripture*, *Revelation*, *Inspiration*, *Infallibility*, *The Trustworthiness of the Gospel*, and *The Miraculous Ele-*