

# Harvard Theological Review

<http://journals.cambridge.org/HTR>

Additional services for *Harvard Theological Review*:

Email alerts: [Click here](#)

Subscriptions: [Click here](#)

Commercial reprints: [Click here](#)

Terms of use : [Click here](#)



---

***Basil the Great. A Study in Monasticism. W. K. Lowther Clarke. Cambridge University Press. 1913. Pp. xii, 176. 7s. 6d.***

J. Cullen Ayer

Harvard Theological Review / Volume 9 / Issue 03 / July 1916, pp 338 - 339  
DOI: 10.1017/S0017816000004715, Published online: 03 November 2011

**Link to this article:** [http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract\\_S0017816000004715](http://journals.cambridge.org/abstract_S0017816000004715)

**How to cite this article:**

J. Cullen Ayer (1916). Harvard Theological Review, 9, pp 338-339  
doi:10.1017/S0017816000004715

**Request Permissions :** [Click here](#)

help to every student who desires to master the teaching and thought of this early apologist. A full bibliography of the secondary material used by the writer will also be found useful. A carefully prepared, analytical index forms the conclusion of a volume that has been written by an accurate scholar for scholarly readers.

OSWALD W. HOWARD.

QUEBEC, CANADA.

BASIL THE GREAT. A STUDY IN MONASTICISM. W. K. LOWTHER CLARKE.  
Cambridge University Press. 1913. Pp. xii, 176. 7s. 6d.

It has been all too customary to speak of the Church in the East either in vague terms or in sweeping generalities. We have had little careful modern study of the history and institutions of that important part of Christendom. It has been a *terra incognita*, except to a few enthusiasts, and the real conditions have remained unknown even to many of them. Except in doctrinal matters, yet in them only to a limited extent and in quite conventional lines, there is little in English of much value on that part of the Church. Even German scholarship has had little interest in the subject. In spite of the difficulties connected with the study of ecclesiastical affairs in the East, the outlook for a more satisfactory study of Oriental Christianity is improving. The present work may be regarded as one more evidence of a rising interest; and it is a welcome addition to our limited stock of works on monasticism of a scholarly character, even if it touches at many points matters discussed by E. F. Morrison in his *St. Basil and his Rule* (Oxford, 1912).

The present work, although brief, is a piece of scholarly investigation, with the results presented in a compact and lucid manner. Mr. Clarke, an Anglican clergyman, writes with sympathy for the ascetic life in the Church, at least as expressed in St. Basil's Rules, appreciating the elements in the religious life that make for asceticism and recognizing its place in the work of the Church. Here the author appears to some extent as a follower of Harnack, who has done so much to rehabilitate monasticism among Protestant students of history.

The aim of the book is to present the main features of the Rules of St. Basil in their historical setting. Accordingly, there is given a brief study of the monasticism in the century before Basil, and especially of the Rule of Pachomius. This study includes the experience of Basil himself and the conditions of the Church in Cappadocia.

All this is introductory to an examination of the ascetic writings of Basil with an appreciation of the ideals embodied in them. The conclusion is appropriately given to a statement of the influence of Basil's Rules upon monasticism in the East, and through the Rule of St. Benedict of Nursia upon the monastic life of the West. Mr. Clarke finds the advance made by Basil upon Pachomius, his only forerunner, to consist mainly in three points: a consistently and successfully carried-out cenobitism, in which Pachomius, in spite of his vast establishments at Tabennisi, failed; the close connection between monasticism and the Church, whereby the monks became the great support of the Church in the later Roman Empire; and the insistence upon works of mercy and benevolence, including schools, as a part of the monastic system. In this last particular we would add that Basil was far in advance of all monastic rules in the West for centuries. As a matter of fact, there is no monastic rule in the West before the thirteenth century that lays down the duty of maintaining a school in connection with a monastery. The author, in his brief sketch of monasticism in the East, corrects the popular impression that all Eastern monks are Basilians in any sense of the term that resembles the terms Franciscans, Dominicans, or Carthusians. There is strictly speaking no order of Basilian monks. The influence of the Rules upon later ascetic life in the East varied greatly in different places and at different times. Not a few of the ideals for which they stood have been quite lost. Yet Basil remains as the father of organized monachism in the East. It is hardly necessary to add that the whole work is strictly *quellenmässig*.

J. CULLEN AYER, JR.

DIVINITY SCHOOL OF THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA.

CAN WE STILL BE CHRISTIANS? RUDOLF EUCKEN. Translated by Lucy Judge Gibson. The Macmillan Co. 1914. Pp. 218. \$1.25.

The change that has come over the face of the world since this book appeared, even in its English dress, raises the question whether already it possesses more than historical significance. Nevertheless, the volume is an earnest attempt to solve world-problems that antedated the gigantic struggle and will outlast it. In the reconstruction of religious thought and of church organization, which wars and rumors of war may hinder but cannot permanently turn aside, Eucken's contribution deserves its place as that of one who has some real vision of the future.

In eight chapters of condensed but not obscure statement, the