

it is natural to regard as indicative each of a distinct epoch. We know that the first two stages are separated by a considerable interval, and it may be inferred that the second and third are likewise conceived of as divided by a long space of time. Another consideration in favour of this view is that on the contrary hypothesis Christ's reign over His Kingdom in glory would be reduced to a vanishing point. The argument has some show of reason, but the subject is obscure, and a modest interpreter must step cautiously and timidly, as one carrying but a glimmering torchlight to show him the way. Perhaps the apostle's thoughts were as represented, perhaps not; perhaps, like the prophets, he had himself but a dim, vague, shadowy conception of the future, very different from the future that is to be. The chapter on the resurrection in 1 *Corinthians* xv. is a sublime one, full of great thoughts and inspiring hopes. But beyond one or two leading statements, such as that affirming the certainty of the future life, I should be slow to summarize its contents in definite theological formulæ. I had rather read this chapter as a Christian man seeking religious edification and moral inspiration than as a theologian in quest of positive dogmatic teaching. The spirit of the whole is life-giving, but the letter is *δυσερμήνευτον*, and while some interpreters feel able on the basis of it to tell us all about the millennium, and others find therein a universal *ἀποκατάστασις*, when God shall be all in and to every human spirit, I prefer to confess my ignorance and remain silent.

A. B. BRUCE.

A CENTURY OF GERMAN THEOLOGY.

IF Ritschl can be said to have had a rival during the last dozen years, the man who deserved the title was probably Frank of Erlangen. His recent death is mourned by his disciples as premature; but his work was wonderfully

complete. He had finished his three great books—on Apologetics, Dogmatics and Ethics—each in two large volumes; and he had added to them, in the shape of a *Vade-mecum for Students of Divinity*, a kind of summing-up of his experience for the benefit of the younger generation, in which he appears to great advantage. But, it would seem, he was contemplating at least one book more—a History of Recent German Theology; and, although he did not live to complete this design, he lectured on the subject in three separate sessions and left behind a well-written manuscript. This has been published by his son-in-law under the title of *A History and a Criticism of Systematic Theology since Schleiermacher*.¹

The book suffers perhaps in some degree from the lack of the revision which the author himself would have given; here and there the thought is undeveloped, and there is a certain looseness in its entire structure more suitable to the class-room than to the study; but, on the other hand, there is, on this very account, a gain in interest and readableness. The author is talking about events of which he himself formed a part, and about personages with many of whom he was well acquainted; he indulges freely in personal details which only a contemporary could know; and he does not conceal his own likes and dislikes. The whole performance reveals a man of wide knowledge, strong convictions and, perhaps, some prejudices; but it is seasoned in every part with that shrewd and pithy wisdom which is the salt of literature.

The subject, as the title indicates, is German Theology since Schleiermacher; this, however, not only includes Schleiermacher, but a long introductory chapter on the influences by which he was formed. Here the author goes

¹ *Geschichte und Kritik der neueren Theologie, insbesondere der systematischen, seit Schleiermacher.* Von Fr. H. R. von Frank. Aus dem Nachlass des Verfassers herausgegeben von P. Schaarschmidt.

back as far as the Reformation, and ranges down, through the periods of Orthodoxy, Pietism and Rationalism, to Kant and the great philosophies. Naturally the treatment is sketchy, the remarks on the philosophical systems especially leaving much to be desired. Yet even here there are many good and striking things. Of Kant, for example, he makes the characteristic remark, "From his way of speaking about prayer it is manifest that he can never himself have cultivated the habit of prayer. So the intellectual heads and guides of the nation in that age. Yet these men were deified by their disciples, and set not only by the side of Christ but even above Him."

On reaching Schleiermacher, we plunge into the subject proper, and the treatment becomes much fuller and more satisfactory. In common with all intelligent Germans, Frank speaks of Schleiermacher with the utmost veneration, as not only the restorer of theology but one of the restorers of religion in his native land. He is alive, indeed, to the defects of Schleiermacher's system, and points them out in detail; but he contends that the truth which is contained in his writings is to be measured not with the fulness of the Gospel, but against the shallowness and spiritual poverty of the times in which he lived. His supreme merit was the place he gave to Christ, whose image he brought back into the centre of theology. He had also the great merit of inspiring minds which went much farther than his own in exploring the depths of experience and the Word. Curious it is to read here how a champion of orthodoxy like Claus Harms should have owed his conversion to Schleiermacher's *Addresses on Religion*. "It was a Saturday afternoon," he wrote in his Autobiography, "when I began to read. Soon I ordered the maid to say to anyone who might call that I was not at home. I read far into the night and finished it. Thereafter I may have slept a couple of hours, but on Sunday morning I began again at the beginning. Then

I felt in my head as if two screws were boring at my temples. At last I laid the book by, and went out to walk; and it was on this walk that on a sudden I recognised that all rationalism, all æsthetic, all self-knowing and all self-doing in the work of salvation are less than nothing, and it flashed on me like lightning that our salvation must come from Another. If to anyone this seems mysterious or mystic, and this story a myth or phantasm, so let it be; I cannot make it plainer, but I call that the birth-hour of my higher life; or, to speak more exactly, the death-hour of my old man, with his knowledge of divine things; or, to speak more clearly still, in the words in which Jung Stilling spoke of the impression made on him by Herder, I received from this book the impulse to a movement which shall never have an end." Frank's appreciation of Schleiermacher is easily intelligible when we remember how near akin is the "feeling" from which Schleiermacher deduced theology to the "experience" from which Frank derives it. His observations on the connection between the philosophy and the theology of Schleiermacher are particularly good.

After this point the author traces three lines of development.

First, there are the theologians belonging to what may be called the School of Schleiermacher, who developed his method and ideas, such as Twisten and Nitzsch, De Wette and Hase, Lange and Rothe. The truest representative of the school was, however, the Swiss Schweizer, of whom Frank gives a highly appreciative account, as he does also subsequently of the Swiss Biedermann. He is not so generous to others, such as Dorner, with whom he had closer personal relations. Indeed, it must be confessed, Frank supplies some illustration of the fact that the more distant in space a thinker of an opposite school is, the easier is it to do justice to his merits.

The second line of development proceeded from the great

German philosophical systems, especially that of Hegel, and included thinkers like Daub and Marheineke, Baur, Biedermann and Pfeiderer; but it ran aground in Strauss and Feuerbach. It is curious to read here that Hegelianism, which among us has still so vigorous a life, is in the land of its origin a thing of the past—a fact rather deplored by Frank, though he is anything but an Hegelian, because it has given place to a shallow and materialistic realism and empiricism. Though the theologians who endeavoured to express Christian truth in terms of Hegelianism were all influenced by Schleiermacher, the philosopher himself lived at war with the theologian, and a savage attack of his on the theology of “feeling” is here reproduced: “If religion is grounded in feeling, and this feeling is exclusively one of dependence, then the dog should be the best Christian, seeing he manifests this feeling in the highest degree. The dog has also feelings of redemption, when his hunger is relieved with a bone.”

Third in order is the theology which owed its origin to the revival of practical religion in the beginning of the century, after the power of Rationalism had been broken by the disciples of Schleiermacher and Hegel. Of this new school there were two wings—the less ecclesiastical, represented by men like Tholuck, Müller and Dorner; and the Lutheran, represented by Harless, Thomasius, Kahnis, Philippi and others. The author gives a warm and impressive account of the revival of religion, with which he is obviously in deep sympathy, and dwells with lingering fondness on its practical fruits in such forms as home and foreign missions and the institution of deaconesses. He holds strongly that the presence or absence of such fruits is the ultimate test not only of religious movements but of theological systems.

The Revival did not, however, produce the revolutionary effects which some expected from it; at least they were not

permanent. The enthusiasm of faith and hope subsided; the currents of overflowing life withdrew within the wonted channels; the theological ideas also, in their turn, became less warm and confident. The last period described by Frank is, in his eyes, one of reaction, and its chief feature is the growth of a New Rationalism, expressed in two forms—the Higher Criticism and the Ritschlian Theology.

On criticism he has not much to say, the subject of his book being confined to systematic theology. After quoting an eloquent passage of von Hofmann, in which it is said that “the Gospel is now enduring the nails of criticism, as the Lord endured the nails of His critical enemies, the scribes and Pharisees, but that it will rise again from the dead, as He did, not as a mere ghost, but with the same flesh and blood which were pierced and shed by its enemies,” he exclaims: “Alas! we are still in the *Via Dolorosa*, where the nails are being driven into the flesh of the Word of God.” Yet again and again he repeats the warning that orthodoxy has exposed the Church to peril by its delay in sifting out and appropriating those results of criticism which are undeniable.

If on criticism he is reticent, he speaks out with all the more fulness and decision on the Ritschlian theology, of which he has long been the foremost opponent. He begins with a connected account of Ritschl's system; and it would not be easy to find, in a brief space, a more intelligible statement of this great theologian's ideas. But sharp criticism follows the exposition. He complains of a profane, unchristian and arrogant tone in Ritschl's writings, and asserts that the entire school carries its condemnation on its face in the fact of its sterility in the region of practical Christian activity. He calls in question Ritschl's profession of hostility to metaphysics, arguing that at the basis of the system there lies a highly developed metaphysic, only an untrue and self-contradictory one.

The radical defect of the Ritschlian theology is the lack of a true and deep conception of sin. "The consciousness of sin, which was so prominent in Luther, and after him in the Protestant Church—the consciousness that man cannot draw near to a holy God without atonement—is unknown to Ritschl. To him it appears pietistic to make so much of the consciousness of sin. Only in that case Luther was a notorious pietist, and so was Paul." From this Frank deduces all the defects which he ascribes to Ritschl—his one-sided view of the character of God, his inadequate idea of atonement, his ignoring of conversion, and so forth. The followers of the great master, especially Harnack and Kaftan, are handled in the same drastic manner. In finishing his criticism of the former, he says that "his History of Dogma amounts to the annihilation not only of dogma but of the specifically Christian faith"; and, after describing Kaftan's well-known apologetic work, he concludes, "Oh for statistics of the actual results of such cheap and ineffectual argumentations! The offence and the foolishness of the cross are indeed set aside, but the wise of this world, for whose benefit this is done, are only moved to laughter and trample under foot the salt which has lost its savour." In passages like these it is easy to discern not only the heat of the combatant, but the prejudice of the partisan. Yet at a time when the Ritschlian school is taking possession of so many of the chairs in the German universities, the impressions of a critic on the spot of Frank's ability and earnestness are to outsiders of the utmost interest and significance.

The survey of the century, it will thus be seen, closes in a tone of depression. But the impression on the English reader is somewhat different. One cannot help feeling what a magnificent record is here presented of patient and continuous thought on the profoundest of all subjects carried on from generation to generation by men of every variety of gifts; no other nation has anything like it to show. And

surely the very existence of so many ways of construing the experience which has grown out of the facts and the words of revelation is itself a kind of proof that the Christian life is a reality, and not a dream.

JAMES STALKER.

THE AKHMÎM FRAGMENT AND THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

ST. JOHN differs from the synoptics with regard to the day of the crucifixion. In the Fourth Gospel it is the day before the passover. The Jews would not enter Pilate's judgment hall lest they should be defiled, "but that they might eat the passover," for "it was the preparation of the passover" (xviii. 28 and xix. 14). Many attempts have been made to explain away what appears to be the plain meaning of these and other passages, so as to bring the Fourth Gospel into harmony with the synoptic tradition which says that Jesus sat down to eat the passover with his disciples the night before He was crucified. But the Gospel of Peter says distinctly that it was "before the first day of unleavened bread, their feast" (*πρὸ μιᾶς τῶν ἀζύμων, τῆς ἑορτῆς αὐτῶν*) when Herod handed over the Lord to the people for crucifixion. Whether the writer of the Petrine fragment was following the Fourth Gospel or an independent tradition, this would be evidence in support of the literal acceptance of the words in John xviii. 28, xix. 14, etc.

Another point of controversy has been the method of naming the hours of the day in the Fourth Gospel. In the June number of the *Classical Review* Dr. Edwin Abbott gives some additional reasons for holding that the hours in the Fourth Gospel are the same as in the synoptics, namely, the twelve hours from sunrise to sunset. It may afford some further confirmation to the same view when we find the Petrine fragment, which shows some affinities with the Fourth Gospel,¹ clearly using the ordinary method of counting. It says that the darkness commenced at noon (*Ἦν δὲ μεσημβρία καὶ σκότος κατέσχε πᾶσαν τὴν Ἰουδαίαν*), and that it was found to be the ninth hour when it ended (*τότε ἥλιος ἔλαμψε καὶ εὐρέθη ὥρα ἐνάτη*).

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¹ "For his chronology of the Passion-history the Petrine writer follows close in the steps of St. John."—Dr. Swete, p. xxv.