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(4) With Ignatius the desire for martyrdom has risen to the height of passion (Trall. x., xii. 3). It is not, however, out of a neurotic desire to suffer ('masochism'), but out of the desire to attain what was the highest personal distinction in the contemporary Church.

(5) Finally, it would appear that the psycho-neurotic tendencies latent in Ignatius' mental constitution were intensified by his experience of prisoner-baiting on the long road to Italy (Rom. v. 1). 'The tension of a soul sorely overstrained rings in every sentence of this pathetic, yet still heroic, figure. We cannot but note the unconscious egoism in many a sentence; yet it is the egoism of a noble mind unstrung.'

Now Canon STREETER asks us to bear in mind the psychological idiosyncrasy of Ignatius in considering the references in his letters to Church government. In particular it is to be remembered that nervous overstrain commonly results in a loss of the sense of proportion, and not infrequently in an obsessive concentration on certain dominant ideas. To Ignatius the monarchical episcopate is literally an *idée fixe*, which accounts for the extravagance of his language in regard to the episcopal office (Eph. vi. 1; Magn. vi. 1; Trall. iii. 1; Smyrn. viii. 2–ix. 1). The same topic recurs, significantly enough, when, on the occasion already alluded to, he was speaking under the control of the prophetic spirit—and the subconscious mind is always the citadel of the *idée fixe*.

'When a man on his road to death is seen using every opportunity to impress one idea with all the prestige that martyrdom would give him; when he enforces it in language neurotically extravagant; and when there is evidence that his subconscious as well as his conscious mind is dominated by the same idea, we may well conclude that it stood to him as the summation of his life's work. But if the consolidation of an ecclesiastical discipline centred in the monarchical bishop was the ideal for which Ignatius had lived, and which he hoped by a martyr's death firmly to rivet on the Church at large, it is a fair presumption that it was a thing which he had had to fight for in his own Church at Antioch.'

Books that have influenced our Epoch.

Matthew Arnold's 'Literature and Dogma.'

BY PROFESSOR JAMES MOFFATT, D.D., UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, NEW YORK.

Literature and Dogma was published in 1873. Like *Unto This Last*, it had been running in the 'Cornhill Magazine' before it appeared in book form. Within less than twelve months the volume had been three times reprinted, and ten years later a cheap edition was issued, with a new preface, so steady was the demand for it in England. Professor Saintsbury pronounces it the worst book Arnold ever wrote, but there is no disputing its vogue half a century ago. One may admit that as a literary piece it will never rank with four other products of 1873, with Morley's *Rousseau*, with Pater's *Studies in the Renaissance*, with Renan's *L'Antéchrist*, or with Hamerton's *Intellectual Life*. But, for all his amateurishness and persiflage, Arnold was in earnest, and he touched a subject of immediate interest to the English people in the nineteenth century. His reputation as a literary critic swung his book into a wide circulation, yet he did not set out to write a literary work. He was for the time being a lay preacher and teacher, who addressed an erring generation. *Literature and Dogma*, it must be recollected, came in the wake of *Essays and Reviews* and of Colenso's Old Testament sensations. *Essays and Reviews* in 1860 had particularly aroused the religious public by its presentation of scientific and historical criticism. For the first time the bearings of these upon the interpretation of the Bible were indicated, and the controversy had agitated all schools of

faith. Arnold was seriously concerned. He saw or thought that he saw Christianity endangered by an entangling alliance with outworn ideas of religion, and the Bible compromised by the Church's adherence to impossible views about miracles and prophecy. He watched the triumphant school of men like Clifford challenging religion in the name of science, and he had a genuine fear, on the other hand, that the masses might relapse into the cheap atheism of Bradlaugh. The orthodox either in the Church of England or among the Dissenters seemed to Arnold to possess no weapons of defence against these adversaries; to 'restore religion as they understand it, to re-enthrone the Bible as explained by our current theology, whether learned or popular, is absolutely and for ever impossible—as impossible as to restore the feudal system, or the belief in witches.' Such being the situation, what was to be done? This, Arnold argued: to show that the religion of the Bible is not what popular theology thinks, that it is really a natural religion which can be verified in experience, that the Bible is literature first and foremost, not a book of dogma, and that the man in the street must be taught, as he reads the Bible, 'to read between the lines, to discern where he ought to rest with his whole weight, and where he ought to pass lightly.' Such was Arnold's honest aim. He believed sincerely in the religious function of the Bible, and he wrote this book in order to preserve the Bible alike from its agnostic opponents and from its professional defenders. No duty seemed to him more pressing than this, no subject more vital.

Arnold would not have been Arnold if he had not been what some of his critics have called 'repetitious,' in this book. But this tiresome habit of reiterating phrases was deliberate; he intended to educate his readers, and his easy conversational style led him to say the same thing over and over again for the sake of emphasis. Neither would he have been himself had he not dropped scathing comments on a variety of men and things. Unitarians, Romanists, Dissenters, and Bishops, all come in for scathing sentences, as he proceeds on his way. Nevertheless, these *obiter dicta* do not interfere with the determined purpose of his pages, despite their occasional irrelevance and errors in taste. 'If we can but dissolve what is bad,' he wrote to a correspondent in 1868, 'without dissolving what is good!' This hope and aim is the clue to *Literature and Dogma*; he desired to dissolve the inferior elements of belief about the Bible in order to conserve the real elements.

Arnold's thesis was indeed simple. The object of religion is conduct ('and when we are asked further, what is conduct?—let us answer: *Three-fourths of life*') or righteousness; the 'true meaning of religion is thus, not simply *morality*, but *morality touched by emotion*.' The italics are his own. It was on these axioms that he based his argument, and the cool assumption that they were axioms did more than anything else to exasperate his philosophical critics; when ethicists struck hard at these preliminaries, their attacks on his idea of the moral sentiment generating religion and of this unexplained 'emotion' were too powerful to be brushed aside. But what excited far more passion in religious circles was the calm transcript of Biblical history which followed. Righteousness, Arnold argued, is the absorbing idea of the Old Testament. The Hebrews were distinguished not for metaphysics but for moral passion; 'the monotheistic idea of Israel is simply *seriousness*.' In the primitive stage Hebrewism was wrapped up in the pursuit of individual righteousness; that righteousness tended to life was the dominant belief of the prophets at their best. Arnold will not hear of this being called a revelation. 'Religion springing out of an experience of the power, the grandeur, the necessity of righteousness, is revealed religion, whether we find it in Sophocles or in Isaiah.' But he admits that the Hellenic spirit did not develop this so fruitfully as Israel, and even in Israel, alas, the primitive faith became corrupted in the Exile by Messianic and apocalyptic dreams! Israel, 'who originally followed righteousness because he felt that it tended to life, might and did naturally come at last to follow it because it would enable him to stand before the Son of Man at His coming, and to share in the triumph of the saints of the Most High.' All this is superstition or *Aberglaube*, 'a kind of fairy tale which a man tells himself, which no one, we grant, can prove impossible to turn out true, but which no one can prove certain to turn out true.' Then came Jesus to restore the primitive faith in righteousness by a teaching which turned the individual back upon himself, instead of attending to outward and social duties. This was 'the line in which their [the Jews'] religion was ripe for development,' and the supreme merit of Jesus was that He thereby 'gave men for right action the clearness, spirit, energy, happiness, they had lost.' He showed them the three saving qualities of self-examination, self-renunciation, and what Arnold sentimentally calls 'mildness' or 'sweet reasonableness.' Unfortunately the Evangelists and Apostles committed the

same error as the later Jews of the Exile; they mixed up the teaching of Jesus with extraneous Messianic fancies, with 'a vast *extra-belief* of a phantasmagorical advent of Jesus Christ, a resurrection and judgment, Christ's adherents glorified, His rejectors punished everlastingly.' In the history of the Church there has been far too much attention paid to this extra-belief, instead of to the pure message of the ethical Jesus. 'Thus we have the three creeds: the so-called Apostles' Creed, popular science: the Nicene Creed, learned science: the Athanasian Creed, learned science with a strong dash of temper.' Men are taught to believe these creeds are implicit in the Bible—which is fatal. What has to be done, therefore, is to read the Bible as literature, as the popular expression of what is true natural religion, and not as a collection of proof-texts for dogma. Once this simple clue is followed, once the deflecting influence of the Creeds is checked, Arnold pleads, we shall recognize the abiding value of the Bible, and there will be no fear of it losing its hold upon the modern mind. 'Righteousness and the God of righteousness, the God of the Bible, are in truth quite independent of the God of ecclesiastical dogma, the work of critics of the Bible—critics understanding neither what they say nor whereof they affirm.'

This was a challenge not only to evangelical and episcopal upholders of verbal inspiration, but to men like Mansel who spoke of God as the personal Governor of the universe. Against the former class of theologians it did excellent service by stressing the principle of Biblical interpretation, particularly by protesting that the Bible books were not to be read as if they were all on one level or composed at one and the same period. Such a contention was not entirely new in 1873, but it needed a frank expression, and whatever we may think of Arnold's historical equipment we ought to recognize the value of his main contention. To admit the presence of poetry and symbolism, to note the successive phases of revelation, and to appreciate the difference between periods of inspiration and periods of retrogression, are essential. Arnold taught this in *Literature and Dogma*, saying perhaps no more than Jowett and Stanley had already said, but saying it from a position in which his words, words of a layman who was the foremost literary critic in the country, fell with weight on the mind of thinking England. 'To understand that the language of the Bible is fluid, passing, and literary, not rigid, fixed, and scientific, is the first step towards a right understanding of the Bible.' Arnold did more than any one in that generation to persuade his contemporaries that such a step should be taken, and taken at once.

A second feature in the book is the conviction that there is no Christianity without Jesus. 'Jesus as He appears in the Gospels, and for the very reason that He is so manifestly above the heads of His reporters there, is, in the jargon of modern philosophy, an absolute; we cannot explain Him, cannot get behind Him and above Him, cannot command Him.' On Arnold's principles it is not easy to see why he makes this confession. It may be true, but is it relevant to his position? When he analyses the ethical intuitions of the gospel, for example, he is far below the genius of Sir John Seeley; *Ecce Homo* penetrated more deeply into the uniqueness and essence of the teaching of Jesus than *Literature and Dogma* did; Arnold's preoccupation with what he loves to call the debonair, prepossessing spirit of Jesus showed a less skilful handling of the subject than Sir John Seeley's insistence on the constructive principles as well as the moral indignation and passion of the Master; and to argue, as Arnold actually did, that St. Paul in speaking of 'the word of the Cross' or of 'the dying of Jesus' meant the words of Jesus upon renunciation, is to set a fool's cap on exegesis. Nevertheless, forced and fanciful as his interpretation of the Gospels and Epistles often is, Arnold never imagined that there could be any future for Christianity except along the lines of Jesus. 'Nothing will do except righteousness; and no other conception of righteousness will do, except Jesus Christ's conception of it—His *method*, His *secret*, and His *temper*.' We may agree. We may have obstinate questionings as to whether Matthew Arnold's conception of that conception will do, but with his intuition we agree heartily.

Some critics were provoked by *Literature and Dogma*. *Blackwood's* reviewed it sharply as 'Amateur Theology'—an unfair insinuation, if it meant that no layman should dare to handle theological problems, but otherwise not undeserved, for Arnold was often guilty of the very sin which he rebuked as a lack of culture, namely, speaking without qualification on subjects which require expert knowledge. He caught at etymology rashly in order to support his arguments, till scholars shuddered at his casual explanations of 'man' and 'God.' He derided metaphysics with unguarded phrases. He attacked cleverly some crude forms of contemporary anthropomorphism, and preferred to speak of God as 'the stream of tendency by which all things seek to fulfil the law of their being,' arguing plausibly but vainly that this truth was

scientifically verifiable. It was here that his lack of training betrayed him. Sometimes he was flippant, but the weakness of his book really lay in its inadequate equipment, philosophical and historical, a weakness which was aggravated by the author's confident self-assurance. M. Albert Réville, who reviewed the book appreciatively in the *Academy*, was by no manner of means a Calvinist, but he felt obliged to hint that his friend seemed to forget the 'mystical profundity of Calvinist doctrines and to refuse to see any but their repulsive sides.' Arnold did not forget these inner elements of Calvinism; he never knew them at all. Henry Sidgwick spoke sternly of his love for handling 'the most profound and difficult problems of individual and social life with an airy dogmatism that ignores their depth and difficulty,' and this criticism applies to his well-known treatment of miracles and prophecy, no less than to the desperate attempt to combine renunciation as taught by Jesus with the refined hedonism which was his own ethical ideal. It was indeed a true word to remind his age that Christianity must never be reduced to a programme of theology or even of ethics. 'It is a mistake, and may lead to much error, to exhibit any series of maxims, like those of the Sermon on the Mount, as the ultimate sum and formula into which Christianity may be run up. Maxims of this kind are but *applications* of the method and the secret of Jesus; and the method and secret are capable of yet an indefinite number more of such applications. Christianity is a *source*; no one supply of water and refreshment that comes from it can be called the sum of Christianity.' He was obviously thinking of his contemporary Tolstoy when he said this. But it is as sound as his protest that the Bible is unintelligible if we approach it through dogmatic creeds. Arnold scored some effective hits of this kind as he wrote *Literature and Dogma*. Still, his negative warnings are on the whole more permanent than his positive contributions, for this reason that while he was acute enough to detect the weaknesses of contemporary religion—for example, in defining the personality of God—he had not sufficient knowledge of Christianity to appreciate the strong, instinctive aims out of which these weaknesses arose. He got beyond his depth as badly as some modern psychologists do, in this region. Much in *Literature and Dogma* sounds curiously prophetic of Ritschl, and nothing more so than the depreciation of metaphysics. But then Arnold could not handle the Bible as Ritschl did, and he never recognized in Jesus what Ritschl with his profounder faith saw. Though he realized that the Bible is a transcript of religious experience, his naturalism handicapped him as he described what that experience was. Against literalism and hasty dogmatism he proved effective, but his substitute for what they offered, his presentation of religion as devoid of a Deity who could be conceived as in any sense 'personal' for human thought and need, this was no more than 'grass on the housetop.'

Why, then, should *Literature and Dogma* continue to be read? It is still read, in its popular editions, although not nearly to the same extent as it was forty or even thirty years ago. Its Biblical criticism is for the most part out of date; newer books convey its message more briefly and brightly; and literary critics seem to pass it by with a shrug of despair as they hasten to admire the classical essays of Arnold's prose. Nevertheless, *Literature and Dogma* has a claim on us. Historically we are justified in regarding it as a pioneer work, which opened up fresh trails for later students. It helped to emancipate the public from literalism. Were it only for that, the book would deserve to be noted; Arnold had the courage and the insight to essay a task which no one else was exactly facing, and although like all pioneer work his attempt had its crudities, it evinced a perception of how things were going to move in the next generation. The very fact that so much of his argument seems to us commonplace is a proof that he was right in his main contention, and that in a wide sense he was successful in the effort to popularize newer methods of Biblical interpretation and appreciation.

Even apart from that quality, the book repays the reader. He comes upon sentences now and then which have the true ring of Arnold's style and spirit at its best. Take the close of the preface, for example: 'It has often been said, and cannot be said too often: Give to any man all the time that he now wastes, not only on his vices (when he has them), but on useless business, wearisome or deteriorating amusements, trivial letter-writing, random reading; and he will have plenty of time for culture. "*Die Zeit ist unendlich lang*," says Goethe; and so it really is. Some of us waste all of it, most of us waste much, but all of us waste some.' Or shrewd aphorisms like these: 'Far more of our mistakes come from want of fresh knowledge than from want of correct reasoning.' 'Every time that the words *contrition* or *humility* drop from the lips of prophet or of psalmist, Christianity appears.' 'All history is an accumulation of experiences that what men and nations fall by is want of conduct.' 'Certainty and grandeur are

really and truly characters of Christianity.' 'Feeling the force of a thing is very different from understanding and possessing it'; or the famous description of Frederick Denison Maurice who had just died, 'that pure and devout spirit, of whom, however, the truth must at last be told, that in theology he passed his life beating the bush with deep emotion and never starting the hare.' Well, *Literature and Dogma* did start a hare, and the hare is still being coursed.

Literature.

THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

The Primitive Church (Macmillan; 8s. 6d. net), by Canon B. H. Streeter, contains the inaugural course of Lectures on the Hewett Foundation, delivered last year at Union Theological Seminary, New York, and at Harvard University. The author's study of the Primitive Church herein embodied is with special reference to the origins of the Christian ministry; and the result of his study is to show that there was variety in the primitive and apostolic order, and that Episcopalian, Presbyterian, and Independent may each appeal to that order for confirmation of its special usage. The corollary that Dr. Streeter suggests is that a common recognition of these facts (and he sincerely believes them to be facts) will not only serve to still the voice of ecclesiastical controversy, but prepare the way for Christian unity.

These lectures appeal principally to the professional student, and from the nature of the subject are largely critical and exegetical; but Dr. Streeter, aided to no small extent by his publisher, has succeeded in producing a book which the interested layman will find not merely readable, but also in parts rich in human interest. Especially to be mentioned in this last connexion is the discussion of the attitude of Ignatius to the matter of Church Order—a discussion to which we have drawn special attention in another column.

At the outset of his book Dr. Streeter bids us disabuse our minds of the traditional picture of the Twelve Apostles sitting at Jerusalem, 'like a College of Cardinals,' systematizing the faith and order of the Primitive Church. 'They had a more urgent work to do. The Day of Judgment was at hand; their duty was to call men to repent before it was too late.' Instead of a faith and order determined from the beginning, we are to contemplate an evolution both in theology and in Church organization, explicable as a reaction of organism to environment. In particular there is to be noticed, in reference to the Christian ministry, a movement away from the state of things where preeminence in the Church depends on the personal possession of some spiritual *gift* (of which 'government,' this Episcopal writer feels bound to indicate, is one of the least esteemed) towards a state of things where importance is attached to the holding of an *office* of authority. Yet in Asia (as we may gather from the Pastoral Epistles and 1 Peter), in Syria (as we may gather from the Didache and the Ignatian letters), and in Rome (as we may gather from Hebrews and James and the Epistle to Clement), during the first hundred years of Christianity, the system of government varied in the Churches, and in the same Church at different times. 'Uniformity was a later development; and for those times it was, perhaps, a necessary development.' But 'it may be that the line of advance for the Church of to-day is not to imitate the forms, but to recapture the spirit, of the Primitive Church.'

DANIEL.

For the adequate interpretation of the Book of Daniel two qualifications are indispensable: the commentator must have a thorough knowledge of Greek, Hebrew, and especially Aramaic in its historical development, and he must have an equally thorough knowledge of Apocalyptic. Dr. Charles possesses both these qualifications in preeminent degree. He had already written a shorter commentary on Daniel for the Century Bible, and his great book on Revelation revealed him as a scholar who was both able and willing to take a line of his own. The same immense learning and the same independence of judgment characterize his voluminous *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Daniel* (Milford; 30s. net).

Dr. Charles admits that this has proved the most difficult of all his studies in an experience of nearly