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4. Our records have preserved another appreciation of Jesus by the men and women of His own day that should be observed by us with particular delight. St. Luke makes the following comment on the popular impression of Christ's ministry: 'And all bare him witness, and wondered at the words of grace which proceeded out of his mouth.' That phrase 'words of grace' does not mean only gracious, kindly words, contrasting, perhaps, with the harshness and dictatorial bluntness of the Scribes and Pharisees. That is suggested, no doubt. But far deeper than that, the people felt the essential *message of redeeming grace* that lay at the back of His words. What they noted was a question not only of the manner or 'manners' of the messenger, but of the content of His message. The old hard legalistic notions of God were wholly absent from His preaching. He spoke of God, first and last, as Father, as a God of love, mercy, tenderness, and pardon. It was not that He emphasized the laws of God's righteousness less than the Pharisees did. Indeed, He spoke of the justice and even the anger of a righteous God more than any legalist ever had done. But beyond this, about this, and mellowing this, was His message of the welcoming, forgiving, redeeming heart of God

the Father. That God could so immediately and so fully forgive a repentant sinner, as was shown in the Parable of the Father and the Prodigal Son, was a doctrine of grace that must have moved His age with a joyous astonishment we can never understand. And the puzzlement of the Elder Brother in the story is only a proof that the official legalism of the day could not grasp the full grace of the message.

None the less, His own age noted and hailed the grace of His message as 'good news.' The record says that the common people heard Him gladly. Not only were they pleased when He so brilliantly refuted the Pharisees and turned aside all their dialectic obstructions, but they took the big message of God's love to their own hearts. That people such as Matthew, the outcast publican, should be among His chosen Twelve, and that a man like Zacchæus or a woman like the Magdalene were among His ordinary friends, is sufficient proof that the sinners heard Him gladly and responded to His message of grace. There can be no doubt at all that the multitudes of His age received Him, welcomed Him, and followed Him. He came unto His own, *and His own received Him with passionate adoration.*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> J. Black, *An Apology for Rogues*, 159.

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## Man's Origin and Fall.

BY THE REVEREND J. H. MORRISON, M.A., ABERDEEN.

DR. EMIL BRUNNER declares that the doctrine of the Fall is of the first importance. For sin is not just a bias of the will, but an integral element in human nature as it now exists. Man *is* a sinner, he is affected by sin in the kernel of his personality. But Brunner, as is well known, is at war with the dominant thought of the age. Opposed to him are many Christian teachers who, under the influence of a doctrine of evolution, ignore or minimize or expressly repudiate the idea of a fall of man. Here is a vital issue. Is man a fallen being, or is he a heroic aspiring creature with the morning sun striking on his uplifted brow? Were they mistaken who spoke of him as strayed and lost and sinful, and must we now crown him with the proud title of *Homo Sapiens*? Should we hail his total achievement with a rousing 'Bravo!' and cheer him on his upward way, or should we preach the

gospel to him? In short, is he needing to be redeemed from his fallen state by the grace of God, or is he capable, given time, of being his own saviour?

The raising of this vital issue is due to the complete ascendancy which the doctrine of evolution has gained over the thought of our time. It has not only affected every department of knowledge, including ethics and religion, but it has brought about a new mental orientation which seems to render certain ways of thinking impossible and obsolete. It may not be inappropriate if we attempt some brief inquiry into the ascertained and established facts as distinct from theoretic speculations, and endeavour to find out how far these facts entitle us to go, what conclusions may legitimately be drawn from them, and what bearing they have on the Christian doctrine of man.

## I. EVOLUTION.

Evolution is no novelty. The principle was firmly grasped by the ancient Greek philosophers who gave systematic expression to the consciousness which every thoughtful man has that we live in a world of change. But the all-important question of *how* the process of change was effected remained unanswered till Darwin came. He advanced an impressively simple explanation of the *modus operandi*. Limiting his investigations to the world of living creatures he reached the conclusion that they all have a power of varying indefinitely, and that these minute variations are weeded out under the pressure of the struggle for existence by a process of natural selection whereby the favourable are preserved and the unfavourable perish. In this way it became possible to imagine how in the immense lapse of the ages from one or at most a few primitive forms diverging from each other there has come to pass the endless complexity of the organic world. The publication of Darwin's work was a momentous event in the history of science. At one leap evolution, from being a philosophical speculation, became a practical working theory. It was received with enthusiasm by students of Nature who were being snowed under by ever fresh accumulations of unrelated facts. It provided them with a thread to guide them through the maze. Now at last they could see order emerging out of confusion; the very framework of Nature stood revealed.

Nothing could have surpassed the patience of Darwin in his investigations and his scrupulous regard for truth, and his work gave an impetus to research and led to an intellectual awakening for which the world must for ever be his debtor. But he cannot be held responsible for all that came after him, for not all of his followers have inherited his spirit. Many have been so carried away by the simplicity and beauty of the theory that they are unable to see the facts of Nature except through its medium. Yet John Stuart Mill warns us in his *Logic* that the assumption that Nature is simple is one of the greatest of fallacies. 'A large proportion of all the errors ever committed in the investigation of the laws of nature, have arisen from the assumption that the most familiar explanation or hypothesis must be the truest.'<sup>1</sup> Einstein's theory is not so simple as Newton's, which it has superseded, and it is too soon to rest in the belief that Darwin has spoken the final word. Many popularizers of the theory and many

<sup>1</sup> J. S. Mill, *System of Logic*, v. iii. 3.

preachers have been extremely incautious. 'I marvel,' said Lord Kelvin, 'at the undue haste with which teachers in our Universities and preachers in our pulpits are re-stating truth in the terms of evolution, while evolution itself remains an unproved hypothesis in the laboratories of science.' Heedless of this warning many have given free rein to their fancy and have drawn imaginary pictures of what the world must have been like, and how creatures must have acted in accordance with the accepted theory. It is not too much to say that the fanciful suggestions of the school of Paley in support of the doctrine of design have been more than equalled by the same sort of work in the schools of the evolutionists.

Much water, however, has flowed under the bridge since Darwin's day. Science has not stood still. In particular, most significant advances have been made in palæontology; embryology has become practically a new science; while the laws of Mendel have been discovered or rather resuscitated. Darwin himself, had he still been with us, would have been the most eager to welcome the new knowledge with open mind. He would never have dreamed of arguing, as some of his followers do, that the facts must fit his theory. Even a casual survey of the evidence as it is before us to-day will enable any person of ordinary intelligence to reach certain conclusions with some degree of confidence.

(a) Many facts of Nature do not seem to fit into the framework of Darwin's theory. Patient investigation will bring to light a surprising number. There is a regrettable tendency to emphasize and placard the favourable evidence and to leave in obscurity the facts which are intractable. Let one illustration suffice. Much prominence has been given to the Nuttall blood tests according to which, through the reaction set up by blood transfusion, different degrees of relationship are demonstrated between man and the lower creatures, particularly the apes. It may be remarked in passing that Nuttall's results are not all so unambiguous as is sometimes represented, one test indicating that the lemur (a species of monkey) was no nearer of kin to man than the crab, while in another test man was relegated to a class which included, besides the gorilla, the sheep and the civet cat! But passing over these as mere details which the popularizer may feel himself justified in ignoring, one cannot help remarking by contrast the remarkable absence of comment upon the difficulties which arise to the evolutionist from the irregularity in the chromosome numbers of different

species of germ cells. The germ cell, as is now known, is equipped with its definite number of chromosomes and genes which are the direct agents in transmitting life and determining specific characteristics. Now, if the number of these had been found to be arranged in orderly succession with the ape next to the human, it would undoubtedly have been hailed as the final proof of kinship, far more convincing than the chemical composition of the blood. But unfortunately there is no discernible order, some insects even having more than man. We look in vain for any evolutionist to give due emphasis to the fact that here at the vital centre, in Nature's most secret crucible, where life is generated and specific differences determined there is no discoverable trace of orderly evolution, but all is shrouded in impenetrable mystery.

Such facts steadily accumulate and are significant of the need of a more comprehensive theory which shall include and explain them. Scientists are finding it ever harder to put the new wine into the old bottles. It is an acknowledged fact that widely different species may develop new features and similar structural changes quite independently of one another. Sir Arthur Keith repeatedly explains such coincidences by the remark that the assumed common ancestor, though showing no sign or trace of that new feature, must have had a 'bias that way.' If Newton had explained the falling apple by the platitude that it must have had a bias that way, he would not have done much to advance the science of physics.

(b) There are scientists of weight who, in the light of all the facts, have found Darwin's theory inadequate. Passing over the great name of Virchow, who was from the first an opponent, one may mention De Vries, who argues that variations 'cannot even by the most rigid and sustained selection lead to a genuine overstepping of the limits of the species, and still less to the origin of new and constant characters.'<sup>1</sup> By his theory of Mutations, now generally accepted, according to which new species leap into being suddenly and without any known preparation, he has altered the whole basis of Darwinism. More recently Professor Leo Berg of Leningrad has published his monumental work on *Nomogenesis*. A Professor in Leningrad will not be suspected of theological bias, but point by point he counters the Darwinian theory with massive argument and wealth of biological evidence. His position is that living creatures have developed

<sup>1</sup> *The Mutation Theory*, i. 4.

from tens of thousands of primary forms, that the processes of change have often been convergent instead of divergent, that there have been no chance variations, but all have been governed by law, and that new species have arisen by leaps and have been sharply distinguished and have bred true from the first. Opinions will naturally differ as to the value of such theories, but to say, as is sometimes said, that all competent scientists are evolutionists is simply to stultify oneself, *if by evolution you mean Darwinism*.

(c) Even by those who still look to Darwin as the Master, his theory has been modified almost beyond recognition. Nothing would more conduce to clear thinking on this subject than a strict definition of the word 'evolution.' The term has been extended to cover everything. 'Evolution is orderly change,'<sup>2</sup> we are told, or 'Evolution is Nature's way,'<sup>3</sup> in which case, of course, we are all evolutionists. But the characteristic features of the Darwinian theory, viz. chance variations, progress by minute increments, the natural selection of the lucky hit, all these have notably faded into the background. Sir J. Arthur Thomson declares that 'the naturalists of to-day are not so intellectually comfortable as their fathers were in declaring a result to be "the outcome of evolution."'<sup>4</sup> Professor Bateson, in the Darwin Centenary Volume, wrote that 'no one can survey the work of recent years without perceiving that evolutionary orthodoxy developed too fast, and that a great deal has got to come down,' while later in his address as President of the British Association he caused no small stir by declaring that Darwin's theory, however admirable, was no longer authoritative. Professor Lloyd Morgan, whose theory of Emergent Evolution is in principle radically different from Darwin's, stresses the fact that 'in every field of inquiry we find abundant evidence of that which is the very opposite of evolution and is sometimes called "degeneration" or "devolution."'<sup>5</sup>

From all this it will appear that while scientists naturally cling to the governing idea of evolution, for without it scientific thought would again be adrift on 'blind night seas without a saving star,' yet with all that there is a growing consciousness that the problem is more complex than it was at first thought to be, and that the origin and relationships of species are wrapped in mystery. 'Per-

<sup>2</sup> Thomson and Geddes, *Evolution*, p. ix.

<sup>3</sup> *Creation by Evolution*, i.

<sup>4</sup> *Concerning Evolution*, 97.

<sup>5</sup> *Creation by Evolution*, 343.

haps the problem is beyond scientific solution,' says Sir J. Arthur Thomson. 'Perhaps the best answer is "*Ignoramus*."' <sup>1</sup> So we find Professor Osborn making the interesting suggestion that 'as Einstein follows Newton, so some great philosopher of biology will follow Darwin.'<sup>2</sup> What theory the Einstein of biology will propound it would be too impious and daring to suggest, however fascinating to imagine. Will he find the source of organic similarities in the ordering of a single mind rather than in biological descent from a single ancestor? Will his thought move along the line followed by Berg and others, leading to the conclusion that the world of living things is not to be conceived as a single tree but as a forest sprung from a multitude of seeds sown in the earth, and will he trace the human family tree back to one of these primitive seeds? Or, on the other hand, will he link together all living things in one organic whole, but noting the facts of devolution as well as those of progress, marking how at all stages of the advance creatures have turned aside into blind alleys whence further progress was impossible and man alone has gained the summit—noting all this, will he conclude that the mysterious thread of man's true ancestry was present from the first and provided the root stock of the great tree of creation? The future will declare. But in the meantime we do well to avoid the danger of anchoring fast to a rigid theory of evolution which is already half submerged by the rising tide of scientific thought.

## II. THE HUMAN FAMILY TREE.

The fault of a dominant theory is that it becomes autocratic and impatient of criticism. The dominance of the Darwinian theory has imperiously demanded a certain line of ancestry for man. It requires that as we go backward, stage by stage, we should encounter lower and lower forms till man merges with the beasts. And so, instead of the quest of the Holy Grail, the knights of science are all out now on the search for the missing link. One would not object to this search if it were conducted with scrupulous fairness, but the mental bias which we have already noted is particularly obtrusive here. All that differentiates man from the apes is too lightly passed over, evidence favourable to the dominant theory is eagerly gathered and emphasized, evidence less favourable is reluctantly admitted, or even suppressed.

<sup>1</sup> *Concerning Evolution*, 182.

<sup>2</sup> *Creation by Evolution*, p. x.

As an instance of this take the case of Dr. Dubois, the famous discoverer of the Java man. In 1894 he brought home part of an ape-like skull, a left thigh bone, and three teeth of human type, which he had found near each other in a geological deposit of late pliocene origin. 'Many competent anatomists,' as Sir Arthur Keith says, 'are of opinion that the thigh and teeth are human, the fragment of skull an ape's.' But, aside from that, Dr. Dubois gave to this composite creature the name of *Pithecanthropus erectus* (the erect ape-man), and for a quarter of a century the scientific world discussed him as a missing link, and for the most part accepted him as just the sort of being—half-man, half-ape—we should expect to find at that geological period. In 1920, however, a genuine human skull of pleistocene date was unearthed in Australia, and then, for the first time, Dr. Dubois informed the world that he had found a similar skull in Java before he found *Pithecanthropus*! In plain words, a scientist of international reputation published that part of the evidence which confirmed the dominant theory, while for twenty-six years, during which time the scientific world battled over the question, he kept silence about an important bit of evidence which conflicted with the theory. Sir Arthur Keith's comment on this is, 'We may doubt if Dr. Dubois' reticence was politic, but we cannot question his honesty.'<sup>3</sup> Sir Arthur's conception of honesty would seem to be somewhat primitive.

Again, there was a marked difference between the ready acceptance of the ape-like remains of the Piltdown man and the reluctance to admit the antiquity of the Galley Hill man, a genuine human type, found in an equally ancient deposit. Speaking at a meeting of the Geological Society of London, Sir Arthur Keith says: 'Mr. E. T. Newton who, in 1896, brought the Galley Hill discovery before the same Society as now discussed the Piltdown find, was also present. It must have puzzled him to explain why the audience, which in 1896 refused to accept the Galley Hill discovery, because the remains were those of a being much as we moderns are, should extend so ready an acceptance to the very simian form of man which had been raised from the Piltdown fragments.'<sup>4</sup> Elsewhere he deplores this tendency on the part of scientists to let the theory govern the facts. His own estimate is that *homo sapiens* has bred true to type for the last half million years at least, and that the progress of discovery has shown him to have been not the descendant but the contemporary of Neanderthal man and all the rest

<sup>3</sup> *The Antiquity of Man*, 440.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 506 f.

of the so-called missing links. This, surely, is an ancestry that might well satisfy the most fastidious.

It is instructive to trace the changes which have gradually taken place in the diagrams which picture the line of man's evolutionary descent. In Haeckel's diagram we find among the direct ancestors of man half-apes, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and so on. In more recent diagrams question marks begin to take the place of names. One by one the half-apes are moved aside out of the direct line of man's ancestry on to side branches, until in Sir Arthur Keith's diagram the main stem is cleared down to the root. This would seem in a singularly striking way to set man apart, and would of itself justify us in seeing in man, as Sir J. Arthur Thomson sees in him, 'a new synthesis, if ever there was one; no mechanical resultant, but a vital new creation.'<sup>1</sup> Moreover, when we consider how at every stage all along the line of ascent living creatures seem to have missed the upward road and turned aside into blind alleys where they remained fixed or even began to degenerate, does it not suggest that in some mysterious way, deep embedded in Nature, there is a principle inimical to progress, some inscrutable power which continually obstructs and diverts and frustrates? To quote Professor Lloyd Morgan, 'Must we not recognise *fall* to lower levels as well as *rise* to higher levels? The question is one of fact. My belief is that this reversal of order, this downward passage in state or in status is a feature of the world in which we live.'<sup>2</sup> All this leads us directly to the further question whether man alone of all created beings has completely escaped this influence.

### III. THE FALL.

To the rigid evolutionist any such idea as the fall of man is frankly incredible, a rock in the sky, a conception for which no room can be found in his system. And such is the dominance of evolution even in the realm of theological thought that the doctrine of the Fall has in recent times been widely ignored or openly abandoned.

It seems best to approach the matter, not from the side of Scripture, but from a study of the facts as they lie before us. Now the most obvious fact confronting us is the fact of a strange conflict within human nature. Man is at war with himself. By universal consent he is not all that he ought to be. He is conscious himself of having fallen

below his own ideal. He is not true to his own nature as even the lower creatures are. In commenting on this, Chesterton wittily remarks that while we may say to a man, 'Be a man,' there would be no appropriateness in saying to a crocodile, 'Be a crocodile.' The phrase, 'Be a man,' is a confession that man is in some sense not truly himself.

The evolutionary explanation, of course, is that man has not yet been able to rid himself completely of the relics of the brute. It is an explanation flattering, indeed, to the man but less than fair to the brute. It reminds one of the Jewish taunt that the Christians have appropriated all the blessings and left the curses to the Jews. We should think him a mean and foolish fellow who, when overtaken in a fault, should lay the blame on his great-grandfather. Is it any less mean and foolish to lay the blame of man's sin on the ape and tiger? Nothing that the ape and tiger ever did is for a moment comparable to the sum of human wickedness. When we ask where among the lower creatures is there such wanton cruelty, such diabolic infliction of pain as man has been guilty of, we are bidden look at the cat playing with the mouse. *Ridiculus mus*, to set over against the tortures of the Inquisition and the horrors of the world war! If the ape and tiger could retort, they might make some scathing comments on the ways of *homo sapiens*. They might ask whether the present state of the world was to be taken as evidence of his sapience.

But further, there is a qualitative difference more important and significant than the quantitative difference. Sin in man is a thing *sui generis*, with nothing that really corresponds to it in the actions of the lower creatures. It belongs to a world higher than that in which they live and move, the world of moral values. It is distinctive in respect of the fact that it does violence to human nature, which in the voice of conscience protests against it. It creates a sense of shortcoming, a feeling of shame and guilt such as none of the brute creation knows. As Walt Whitman says somewhere, 'Cows don't lie awake at night thinking about their sins.'

The question then is, How has man come to be in this state in which he finds himself? Whence has arisen this conflict within human nature? Why is it that man fails to be what he feels he ought to be, and stands convicted in his own eyes? Manifestly, as this state of things is not only of wide but of universal prevalence, we must seek for some very deep and primeval cause. The stream of human history must have been polluted near

<sup>1</sup> *Concerning Evolution*, 207.

<sup>2</sup> *Creation by Evolution*, 344.

the fountain-head. We have seen that Professor Lloyd Morgan finds traces throughout the whole course of organic evolution of two opposite tendencies, and recognizes the fact of 'fall to lower levels as well as rise to higher levels.' May it not be that here we have the crowning instance of it? Man has undeniably attained to a higher level of existence than any other living creature, yet somehow he seems not quite to have hit the mark. In the conscience of the race there is irrefragable evidence of this, and our doctrine of man, to be adequate, must take account of the fact. Sir Oliver Lodge maintains the balance when he says, 'The upward step was unmistakable; mankind tripped over it and fell, but not irremediably.'<sup>1</sup>

From all this it would appear that the Christian doctrine of the Fall is not necessarily in conflict with the findings of modern science, but on the contrary is capable of being stated in terms of evolution by those who desire so to state it. Somewhere the Rubicon must have been crossed. As there was a point in the creative action which constituted man a 'living soul,' so there must have been a point of moral decision which constituted man a sinner. The root of the matter must have lain from the first in the moral realm. To state it as a mere relic of the beast is to ignore the vital point of guilt. Popular exponents of evolution would claim for man all the credit of the ascent, while they lay on his animal ancestry all the blame of his failure. This has profoundly influenced the modern doctrine of man, presenting him as a heroic being, more to be admired and pitied than blamed, struggling manfully to throw off the burden of heredity, and prove himself the master of his fate and of the world. But does this really accord with the facts as they are before us? Man can claim no credit for his ascent, any more than a Scotsman can claim credit for not being born a Hottentot. The human race, like every other grade of living beings, has been constituted by a mysterious creative act over which man had no control. But, on the other hand, his failure is his very own. On the witness of his own conscience he stands discredited as one who has somehow come short, and is to be blamed for his shortcoming. If we seek to trace this back to its origin, what more likely than that it took its rise in some original act of disobedience where man set his will in opposition to the will of God and turned aside after his own way. Speaking of primitive man, Sir Oliver Lodge says, 'He may well have heard a voice whispering to him, as a sort of tempta-

tion, "Ye shall be as gods."'<sup>2</sup> And in the ambitious pursuit of a false independence man 'tripped on the upward step' and fell.

This doctrine of man as fallen obviously fits into the whole structure of the Christian faith, and gives to the work of Christ a cosmic significance, such as St. Paul assigns to it. We may interpret the evolutionary process as having had for its supreme aim the bringing into being of a family of the sons of God. Why the divine process followed the line it did we cannot tell. 'How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out.' But all along the line and at every stage of the process living creatures appear to have turned aside into blind alleys, where 'progress halts on palsied feet.' For them there is henceforth no salvation; nevermore shall they be upborne on the rising tide of life; their doom is sealed. So there came a point, far higher in the scale of being, when man having been brought thus far on the upward way took the fatal turning and entered on the downward path of sin and death. He thereby cut himself off from the higher reaches of life, and incurred the doom of all the lower creatures, 'Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.' 'Sin entered into the world,' says the Apostle, 'and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.' To reply to this by reminding us that long before man appeared on the scene death was in the world, among the lower creatures, is simply to beg the whole question. The argument has no relevance except on the assumption that man is wholly like the lower creatures and was born to die. It takes no account of the possibility that man, the living soul into whose nostrils had been breathed the breath of life, was not born to die, but that in him at last the rising tide of created life had reached a level where it might have been beyond the reach of death. Only when man fell did he forfeit his destiny and come under the power of death. All this may seem incredible to the modern mind, even as the resurrection of the dead seemed a thing incredible to the first Christian age, but it will be found easier to disbelieve than to disprove. At any rate this assumption lies at the basis of the Christian doctrine of man, and it would seem to be substantiated by that deep instinct in the human race which has led man in every age to cherish the conviction, '*Non omnis moriar.*'

The Christian doctrine of man as fallen, so far from being pessimistic, becomes the starting-point of the highest hopes. It is never preached except

<sup>1</sup> *The Making of Man*, 84.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 84.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Making of Man*, 84.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 84.

in connexion with the gospel of redemption. It declares sin to be alien from the divine ideal of human nature, a disease that may be cured, a fault that may be forgiven. To fallen man there comes a quickening spirit from above which is able to make him a 'new creature in Christ Jesus.' This is the most glorious of all mutations. Natural science among its most recent findings recognizes the fact that all along the line mysterious influences have caused mutations whereby new species and even new races have suddenly appeared. Following upon this some speculation has been indulged in as to the possible advent of a new and higher race of supermen. The early Christians never spoke of themselves as supermen—that would have been completely alien from their spirit; but

they did recognize themselves as a new race, the *genus* of the sons of God. They believed that in Christ they were following the true line of advance, and had already found in Him Eternal Life. This Christian hope lifts the whole prospect for humanity on to a higher level. It is no longer a dubious upward struggle of the race striving unaided to attain to mastery over Nature, a mastery which in the end is doomed to be overwhelmed in the irresistible downrush of the physical universe. It becomes a divine redemption of the individual as well as of the race, giving the assurance to every man that, though he be fallen indeed below his true nature and destiny, he may yet be redeemed and restored by the grace and power of God.

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## Recent Foreign Theology.

### Pierre Poiret.<sup>1</sup>

It is ground for real satisfaction that a serious attempt has at last been made to do justice to the interesting personality and remarkable influence of Pierre Poiret. Dr. Max Wieser, who has already distinguished himself by contributions to the history of mysticism and pietism, has now issued what will be a most useful account, and what is likely to remain a standard source-book in this connexion.

In this volume fully a hundred pages are devoted to a general survey of Poiret's career, his work as a philosopher (especially in relation to Descartes), as an educationist, and finally as a mystic and one of the world's most outstanding propagators of mysticism. Then follow about two hundred pages of well-selected extracts, giving illuminating contemporary descriptions of Poiret and his activities, which bring him before us in the most intimate manner, with characteristic passages from his own writings and from some of the mystical books which his re-issues did so much to preserve and to popularize. His celebrated catalogue of mystical authors is reprinted. A full and careful bibliography is given of Poiret's numerous publications, and a list of available sources of information regarding him. The interest of the book is further

increased by several illustrations, including the Leyden portrait of Poiret.

Pierre Poiret, a French Protestant pastor (1646-1719), after an attack of Cartesianism, became an ardent disciple of Madame Bourignon, the Quietist whose influence so disturbed the Church of Scotland at the close of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth century. Later he took up, with equally exaggerated enthusiasm, the worship of Madame Guyon, and was chiefly responsible for the publication of her works, as he had been of those of Madame Bourignon. He also brought upon the market new editions of numerous mystical works, mediæval and modern, introducing to a wide circle Thomas à Kempis, the *Theologia Germanica*, S. Catherine of Genoa, Angela de Foligni, M. de Renty, Olier, Vincent de Paul, Armelle Nicolas, Malaval, S. Teresa, Brother Laurence, Fénelon, and other mystical influences. He lived for many years in retirement near Leyden, a short-sighted, rather deaf little man in dressing-gown and velvet cap, cheerfully receiving the respectful visitors who came to consult him, and distributing through the press of the Wetsteins at Amsterdam more spiritual nourishment than if he had himself been one of the great mystics. Dislike of sectarian strife, and devotion to a religion of the Love of God were his guiding principles.

One wishes that Dr. Wieser had made some attempt to trace the influence which Poiret exerted

<sup>1</sup> *Peter Poiret, der Vater der romanischen Mystik in Deutschland*, von Dr. Max Wieser (Georg Müller, München; 1932).