

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_churchman\\_os.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php)

Absolute Being, and that He is the First Cause of the Universe . . . involve a number of contradictions," etc. And then he adds the following weighty words: "Respecting these positions, I observe that none are more ready than Christian Theists to admit that our knowledge of God, though real as far as it goes, is not perfect knowledge, and that there are realities in His being which transcend the powers of our finite intellects to grasp. This, however, is a difficulty which is by no means peculiar to Theism, but is one which extends over the entire range of human knowledge, every department of which runs up into some ultimate, the real nature of which man's finite intellect is unable to fathom. If, therefore, the objection that because our knowledge of God is partial, or because it runs up into problems the solution of which transcends the powers of our finite understandings, is valid against Christian Theism, it is equally so against every kind of knowledge which we imagine that we possess. The reasonings in question, therefore, if carried out to their legitimate consequences, would involve us in universal scepticism."

The chapters which follow are all closely reasoned out, but our space does not permit us to do justice to them. In his argument from adaptation, Mr. Row refers to the human eye, and quoting from a posthumous work of Dr. Carpenter he alludes to a statement of Professor Helmholtz. "Now it is not too much to say that if an optician wanted to sell me an instrument which had all these defects, I should think myself justified in blaming his carelessness in the strongest terms, and in giving him back his instrument;" and then adds Dr. Carpenter's remark that "I have seldom met with a case so unfair as the citation of this statement, without any of the qualifications which it subsequently receives," which are as follows: "It was my object," says the Professor, "to make my reader understand that it was not any mechanical perfection of the organs of our senses which secures for us such wonderfully true and exact impressions of the outer world. The perfection of the eye is practical, not absolute, *i.e.*, adaptation to the wants of the organism; the defects of the eye as an optical instrument being all so counteracted that the inexactness of the image which results from their presence very little exceeds, under ordinary conditions of illumination, the limits which are set to the delicacy of sensation by the dimensions of the retinal cones." We have quoted this passage because some of our readers may have met with the first statement of the Professor, and not seen the latter one.

In conclusion, we will only add that it has been a real pleasure to read this able defence of Christian Theism in which the subject has been treated with singular ability, clearness and candour.



## THE MONTH.

THE trial of the Bishop of Lincoln has been at length concluded. Judgment will not be delivered, it is said, until after Easter.

The Rev. B. F. Westcott, D.D., D.C.L., Regius Professor of Divinity, Cambridge, and Canon of Westminster, is appointed Bishop of Durham; a master in New Testament studies and a justly revered teacher.

The Report of the Special Commissioners has been received by the House of Commons, an amendment by Mr. Gladstone being rejected by a majority of 71.