ultimate issue of things with the absolute and universal triumph of good—when God shall be 'all in all'—which has made some thoughtful men conceive that the state of the lost may carry with it the ultimate dissolution of personality and personal consciousness." And he adds, "I cherish this hope, finding the idea of actually everlasting torment unthinkable."

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It is "an uncertain interpretation," he admits. But the recent tendency to query whether immortality is an essential quality of the soul has evidently impressed him. It is the theory of potential immortality, as worked out in Dr. R. G. Macintyre's book on *The Other Side of Death*, and, from the point of view of New Testament exegesis, it might be defended as a fair inference from the language of the Fourth Gospel. Probably, the emphasis on moral responsibility is enough. If we argue speculatively from that, contending that real life is life in accordance with God, then other life may be viewed as so unreal as to lose any quality of permanence. But the argument is a metaphysical inference, which will be a relief to some, just as it may be a horror to others.

TEN BEST BOOKS ON THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

I FANCY even the truly learned, for whom, needless to say, I cannot speak, would find it difficult to choose from the extensive literature on the Fourth Gospel with the certainty that they had chosen what is best.

With two exceptions, which are specified below, I have set down in my list the books that have helped me most. I have done so in the humble hope that the experience of an old minister who wound up his pulpit work with a systematic course of lectures on the Fourth Gospel, conceived on modern lines, may be useful to some ministers in active service, who feel that they ought to do something educative for their congregations with a book, which the most devout of their people read probably more intently than they do any

other part of the Bible. A good many ministers are deterred from the task by a fear, in part honourable, but in the main inexcusable, lest they should wound susceptibilities which they ought to spare. The minister, say, is himself inclined to the traditional view of the Gospel. He "sees no reason" why it should not have been written by the Apostle John, and should not be the story of an eye-and-ear-witness who supplements but does not in any way contradict the testimony of the synoptic Gospels, yet he has the uncomfortable feeling that this view, plausible in itself and backed by the great learning associated with some of the names about to be mentioned, is yet not so unassailable as he once supposed, and that the time may have come for placing the Gospel in a light that will show its independence of the view that may be taken of its authorship or of its relation to *history*, in the literal sense of that word. It is not too much to say that discomfort of this kind is in our day inevitable, and that there is only one way of dealing with it. We (I mean especially we *ministers*) must look at the facts and probabilities for ourselves, starting of course from the experimental conviction of the unique worth of the Johannine Gospel as a testimony to Jesus the Son of God and to the grace of fellowship with the Father through Him. The result of such investigation can be good only. The good will be twofold: Firstly, we shall know the things in or about the Gospel that are *certain*, and on these we shall nourish our initial sense of its worth. Secondly, we shall speak with frankness of our *un*certainties. It can never be right to express certainty regarding any view which we feel to be only probable. But to speak frankly on the merits of some view —say of the "disciple whom Jesus loved"—may be in a high degree instructive. The sequence of the following list is not intended as an order of merit, though it is to some extent an order of time:

1. Westcott, *Gospel of St. John.*
2. Luthardt, *Das Johanneische Evangelium* (Eng. Tr., T. and T. Clark).
3. Dods, "The Gospel of St. John" in the *Expositor's Bible*, and "John" in *Expositor's Greek Testament.*
4. Wendt, *Das Evangelium Johannis* (Tr. T. and T. Clark).
5. Drummond, *The Character and Authorship of the Fourth Gospel.*
6. Scott, *The Fourth Gospel* (in series, "The Literature of the New Testament."
7. Heitmüller, "Das Johanneische Evangelium" (in *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments neu übersetzt und für die Gegenwart erklärt*).
8. Abbott, *The Fourfold Gospel* (four volumes and an Introductory volume).
9. Burney, *Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel.*
10. Schmiedel, *Die Johanneischen Schriften* (Eng. Tr., A. and C. Black).

Nos. 1–5 represent writers who with more or less confidence believe that the Gospel was written by the Apostle John. Nos. 1–3 represent a practically absolute confidence, and to those who cannot share that confidence it may appear a sufficient reason for not neglecting the works of the learned authors (1 and 2) that the latter are so unconscious of error.

In November, 1887, I marked Westcott's rapt face among the worshippers in the chancel of King's College, Cambridge. No one had prepared me for the spectacle, but my guide to the place informed me after the service that what had struck me laid an habitual spell on some of the worshippers. Eight years before this, in the winter of 1879–80, I sat under Luthardt as a student in Leipzig. I cannot profess much benefit from the writings of these eminently learned and good men. But the experience of many has been different,

and my impression of their personalities is too deep to suffer me to pass them by. Let me say only this. Westcott was a saint and a mystic ; so was "John." And Luthardt was a *commanding* (I use the word in an almost physical sense), dogmatic theologian, and "John" also was "John the Theologian." The case of No. 3 is different. I confess to having found it difficult to forgive Marcus Dods from the heart for so completely ignoring (or, if you will, *evading*) the Johannine problem. But here again memory has come to my aid. I remember his chapter on the "Bread of Life" (John vi.), and I feel that everything should be forgiven to such a prince of exegetes and feeder of souls. At the same time one has confidence in saying to young ministers that the Dods' attitude to the Fourth Gospel is one that is not honourably possible to *them*.

Nos. 4 and 5 may be defined as *transitional*. They form a bridge, I should say a remarkably well-built bridge, between the traditional and the modern view of the Fourth Gospel. The bridge is none the less excellent that both these writers reach comparatively conservative conclusions. They do not proclaim their conclusions as certainties, but only as reasonable hypotheses. The investigation of the last score of years has not confirmed Wendt's theory of what would be practically composite authorship of the Gospel. Yet I am confident in saying that for many ministers, particularly in Scotland, the appearance of Wendt's *John* in English dress coincided with their awaking from "dogmatic slumber" on the subject of the Fourth Gospel. The book is still most readable. It is, e.g., particularly good on the Johannine view of the vitalising quality of the sayings of Jesus. At the time it appeared it made many of us feel that the theory or assumption that "John" could be treated as an extra witness to the facts about Jesus on a level with Mark and Matthew-Luke was no longer tenable. And it did us this

service none the less effectively that its argument was directed largely—or even mainly—to the proof of an apostolic kernel in the Gospel.

Drummond's book appeared in 1903, a year or two after Wendt's. I agree with the reviewer who began with words to the effect that here we had at last a "scientific" treatment in a book of English growth of the Johannine Gospel. The trend of criticism, since Drummond wrote, has been rather off the direction in which he moved with such care and candour. Yet I venture to doubt whether his argument regarding the supposed Papias-testimony to the early death of John the son of Zebedee has really been refuted, and whether sufficient attention has been paid to his conception of the evangelist as one in the alembic of whose mystical mind—indifferent to a degree to sensible events—reminiscences of Jesus became unconsciously reflections and dogmas, which being vital to his own faith he deemed also vital to the faith of the Church. To those who speak of this view as a psychological impossibility Drummond might very fairly reply that for about 1,700 years Christians, learned and simple, have been unaware of the impossibility, and he might quote again (as he does at p. 33 of his book) the words of Origen about the *spiritual* truth being, "as one might say, preserved in the *bodily* lie." One is tempted to regret that Drummond devoted so much attention to the question of the authorship of the Gospel, even while one sees that that attention was vital to the structure of his argument.[1] For in some degree it has diverted the minds of his readers from his fine scrutiny of the Gospel itself. On the other hand, surely, it is almost impossible to study such a work as the Fourth Gospel and not come under a spell of wonder as to the author's

[1] I should regret also that Drummond occupied so much space with criticism of the views of Martineau. Martineau was a distinguished saintly personality and a poet-philosopher, but he was *not* a New Testament scholar.

personality. Drummond also was, with differences, a saint and mystic like Westcott, and on the whole, looking to scope and style and scholarship, and, not least, to the equipment, peculiar to the author of *Philo-Judæus*, I venture on saying that this book is the best monograph we possess on the Fourth Gospel in our own, or, perhaps, in any language.

Nos. 6, 7 and 10 I am inclined, for various reasons, to take together. They are all, in a pretty distinctive sense, *modern* —sometimes perhaps almost too much so. I have read Professor Scott's book through at least three, probably four, times. I do not like it altogether. He seems somehow to have escaped, not indeed the sense but, the spell of the author. Some will value his book, perhaps, for that very reason.[1] I would rather say that, in spite of this, Professor Scott's book is an amazing, a daring, and—a *valuable* performance. Its educative value lies perhaps mainly in the clear perception it gives the reader of the largeness of the fourth evangelist's debt to the Synoptists. I confess that the picture towards the end of the book of the Evangelist as involved—and that pretty helplessly—in the meshes of a dualistic Alexandrian philosophy leaves me cold, if not inclined to controversy. Heitmüller's work I include in the same category with Scott's. It does not please me altogether. Yet it is probably one of the best (and this is saying much) of the *Schriften*. I used it almost exclusively as an immediate guide in preparing my pulpit lectures, and found it truly helpful. In regard to No. 10 I will only say that I was a pupil of Dr. Schmiedel in Jena as long ago as 1879, and that he has been good enough to correspond with me throughout forty-five years as a friend and theological adviser. This makes it almost impossible for me, even if I had the requisite knowledge, to estimate impartially the

[1] A Bristol scholar recently expressed himself to this effect in my hearing.

worth of his very extensive historico-critical work. The book indicated by No. 10 is, however, studiously popular, It seems to me valuable in the sense it gives one of the penetrativeness of the Alexandrian allegorising in the structure of the Gospel and also in the suggestiveness of many of the details of interpretation of the allegories which it supplies.

Of Mr. Burney's (No. 9) linguistic argument I have no right to say anything except perhaps to ask whether, if the Aramaic origin of the Gospel (in Mr. Burney's sense) were established, it would alter in any way the views of scholars as to the Alexandrian atmosphere of the Fourth Gospel. Not necessarily, one might perhaps say, for, since at least about 1831, when Gfrörer's book, *Philo und die Alexandrinische Theosophie*, appeared, many scholars have believed that Alexandrianism was systematically represented even in Palestine in the first Christian century. How much more in Syria or parts of Asia Minor, or wherever Aramaic was a living tongue.

But apart from its philological argument, Burney's book is valuable for the fresh light it seems to throw on the testimonies of Papias and Irenæus regarding John the Presbyter, and the theory that the disciple whom Jesus loved may have been one who did not travel with Him in Galilee, but was a confidant of His in Jerusalem, who had free access to rabbinical circles there, is attractive. If I cannot have John, the son of Zebedee, I think I should like, next best, to have this Jerusalem disciple of Mr. Burney's, especially if he should turn out to be John the Presbyter of Ephesus.

I have kept the last place—and it is one in esteem as high as the highest—for No. 8. Dr. Abbott is still with us. His books on the Gospels, propædeutic, philological and interpretive, make a considerable library, to which the somewhat elaborate symbolic keys provided by the author are indis-

pensable to the reader who would ascertain at the least expenditure of time just what the author has said on a particular point. Unhappily the Abbott Library is for the average minister almost as impossible a prospect as the possession of the *Encyclopœdia Britannica*. Dr. Abbott has not written a monograph covering all he has to say on the Fourth Gospel. But about a year ago I had the good fortune to become the practical possessor of the five volumes entitled *The Fourfold Gospel* (i.e. four volumes *plus* an Introduction), and I have been browsing in these volumes almost daily since. At first one has a certain fear of not seeing the wood for the trees, but in this book that fear soon vanishes. With a skill possible only to one of his learning and deep religious spirit Abbott reweaves the literary structure of the Gospels to its finishing phase in "John," and he has a perfectly distinct theory as to the relation of "John" to the other three Evangelists. In the introductory volume (*The Fourfold Gospel*, Introduction, 177 pp., Cambridge University Press) he lays down and partly illustrates the thesis that where Matthew-Luke agree in differing from Mark, John "intervenes," where possible, in favour of Mark. Those who cannot afford the five volumes will find it quite worth while to get a hold of the brief introductory volume named above. Dr. Abbott's combination of classical, biblical and patristic lore is, one may well feel, unique. If he does not carry his load of learning "lightly as a flower," he does it sanely and reverently in the manner of one who never forgets God who is above him or the reader who is by his side. So grave a writer cannot be expected to be startling. Yet Dr. Abbott startles us at least once by the suggestion that the "disciple" of John xviii. 15 f., so far from being the "disciple whom Jesus loved," may be none other than Judas Iscariot. Yet if one begins with wondering how such an idea could occur to anybody one may end, after reading Abbott on the point,

with wondering why so reasonable an idea has not occurred sooner or oftener to others besides him. May I convey my sense of the worth of Dr. Abbott's work on the Gospels, and especially on "John," by expressing the hope that some rich friend of the Christian religion may be moved to present copies of Abbott's *Fourfold Gospel* to two or three hundred of the sons of the prophets in this country and America along with an injunction to the recipients to read for the next year or two, on this particular subject, nothing else ?[1]

LEWIS A. MUIRHEAD.

THE TEXT OF HOSEA.

(*Concluded.*)

B. IT is suggested that certain passages are not original because they hold out a hope that the doom announced by the prophet may be averted by repentance and amendment, or they predict a happy future after the penalty has been endured—the so-called Messianic sections. The principal

[1] May I be allowed two quotations ? Both passages occur in the Preface to the last volume of *The Fourfold Gospel*, written during the War. The one has reference to the *author* of the Gospel of John, the other to *writers* upon the four Gospels.

(1) Speaking of the optimism of the Fourth Evangelist, Abbott writes : "This [the optimism] may seem to discredit his Gospel. Optimists in these days (1917) are silent or speak in subdued tones. Men's minds are busy thinking rather about diabolical evil and how to crush it, than about the goodness of God and how to exalt it. Yet these Christians who believe that the Spirit of Christ has seldom had fair play in Christian Churches will not allow themselves to be laughed out of a reasonable optimism based on experience."

(2) Speaking of omissions that might have greatly shortened this laborious work and—"avoided some natural accusations of fancifulness," Abbott decides that they "would not have been fair to the reader. The author is conscious of many faults—especially defects in arrangement and condensation ; but he has desired to keep his conscience clear from at least one defect that he regards as unpardonable—the purchase of a clear, brief and forcible persuasiveness at the cost of fairness to the reader and allegiance to truth."