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The *Contemporary Review* for September has an enthusiastic article by Professor Sayce on Mr. Flinders Petrie's recent excavations in Palestine, to which we referred last month. He believes that Palestine exploration has only just begun. "The explorer," he says, "who will devote himself to the labour, as Sir A. H. Layard devoted himself to Nineveh, and Dr. Schliemann to Troy, will obtain results as marvellous and far-reaching as those obtained by Layard and Schliemann. The former story of Palestine has not been obliterated from its soil, as has often been imagined; on the contrary, it is indelibly impressed on the stone and clay which that soil still holds in its bosom. We have dug up Homer and Herodotus; we shall yet dig up the Bible."

Ritschl — Lightfoot — Hatch.

By the Rev. Principal Rainy, D.D.

The three names which head this paper are connected together by the fact that death took them all from us within a few months. A fourth might have been added,—that of Delitzsch,—as eminent and as attractive as any of the others. But to say a fitting word of the other three is a task more than sufficient for the limits I must observe.

I begin with the most remote, and therefore with Ritschl. Ritschl was best known as an independent thinker in dogmatic theology. As such he made a deep mark, and rallied to himself a school of resolute disciples. His teaching raised great issues; for in addition to technical dogmatics, it involved a specific conception of the idea of the Christian life, and of the forces on which that depends. It was connected also with views of the history of theology, and of the relation of Reformation theology to his own dogmatic, which created lively debate. But he was not confined exclusively even to this wide field. When we go back a little in the history of his life, we find him active in investigations belonging to a somewhat different region.

No doubt the dogmatic questions were in his view from the first. In the preface to the first volume of his large book on the Justification and Atonement, which was published in 1870, Ritschl spoke as follows: "Almost thirty years have passed since, in the third semester of my academical studies, I became clear upon this, that with a view to my theological culture I needed, above all else, to come to an understanding of the doctrine of the atonement. I endeavoured at the time to obtain special guidance towards this goal; I did not find it in the form I needed; and now, after connected investigation of the later German theology, I perceive that I had no ground to expect at that time from any one fruitful guidance towards the solution of the problem. Other objects meanwhile forced themselves upon me as matter of scientific effort. After I had brought these to a close, as far as I was concerned in them, I took up again independently the question of my younger days."

The objects which forced themselves upon him were the questions connected with the earliest history of the Church. Those were the days in which the great debate created by the Tübingen school was in full progress. Ritschl became involved in it, because he felt the necessity of coming to a conclusion regarding questions so nearly touching the life of Christianity. At first the speculations of Baur and his followers acquired a great ascendency over him, and he published in 1850 a volume, *Die Alt Katholische Kirche*, which bore very plainly the marks of this state of mind. The positions of the Tübingen men were contested in various details, but no clear or thorough-going principle as to the way of conceiving or construing the history was attained or expounded. The book embodied, therefore, rather the Tübingen position, with qualifications, than the defence of any distinct alternative. Further reflection and study led him to adopt new points of view. In 1857 (after seven years) a second edition appeared. The general arrangement was not much altered. But the author could declare that the book, from the foundation upwards, had become a new book. This second edition of the *Alt Katholische Kirche* I have always regarded as a very instructive and useful work. Ritschl's native aptitude for dogmatics is skilfully applied to the early movements of theological opinion in the Church. The book does better service than any I know in the way of making plain the historical mistakes into which Baur fell in his conception of the Church parties of the apostolic and post-apostolic time. It is still an excellent work to read for the purpose of acquiring insight into the earliest Church history, and the relations of the post-apostolic to the apostolic age. I think it is possible to trace to its influence important elements in Lightfoot's historical views; and I could hardly pay any book a higher compliment.

But this, after all, was only an episode. In the year in which the second edition just referred to was published, 1857, Ritschl returned to the sub-

ject of his early meditations; and a number of important review articles marked the progress of his thought. These led up to Ritschl's main contribution to the theology of his time, viz. his work on the doctrine of Justification and Atonement, in its three divisions, which set forth the historical, the biblical, and the dogmatic or systematic aspects of the subject; the first appearing in 1870, and the other two in 1874. The first of these divisions, the historical, very soon became extensively known in this country by the translation of Mr. Black and Professor Smith, both of whom had studied under Ritschl at Göttingen. The work, as a whole, took an indisputable place as one of the most forcible manifestations of contemporary thought on the theology of redemption. In Germany the weight of it, reinforced by subsequent expositions from the author and his disciples, has been felt ever since. A lively and confident school have formed themselves on Ritschl's principles; and by drawing attacks upon themselves from very diverse quarters of the theological compass, they have recently proved their readiness to meet all comers.

To begin at the circumference, Ritschl's style is not exactly easy reading. Possibly this goes some way to account for a kind of respectful vagueness in regard to Ritschl's teaching, which one notices occasionally in theological minds. It takes a good deal of vigilance and scrutiny to keep perfect touch with him, and to feel sure that you take his meaning thoroughly. It need not be doubted that this meaning is, in itself, really clear and consecutive. And yet as the sentences pass, a slight haze arises between you and him, which it requires a conscious effort to dissipate. This is quite as much felt in the translation as in the original; and fully as much in the historical criticisms as in those portions which are occupied with original discussion. It may be something in the structure of his thought, or something in the manner of expressing it. It does not seem to be quite sharply and legibly minted. The difficulty is not unmanageable, but one always feels it.

The historical review which occupies the first volume, as many of you know, is by itself a very considerable performance, not merely in point of bulk, but as regards the amount of mental work it represents. Every student of doctrine history must reckon with it; and every one who does so will own that it ranks among the books which compel the reader to think. Its main defect as a history for students is that it is not sufficiently objective. It does not take pains enough to depict each scheme from its own point of view. The writer is occupied throughout with the criticisms he has to apply to the successive forms of doctrine. These criticisims are mainly animated by the purpose of clearing the way to his own theory. Hence he is chiefly intent, first, on bringing out those aspects or those points of a given theory to which his criticisms are to apply, and then in developing the criticism itself. In one point of view he was entitled to do this. He might consider himself as writing for a public able to bring to the perusal of the book enough of knowledge to supply any needed cross lights. All I say is, that while Ritschl's criticisms are always worth weighing, you must take it that his sketches, though grounded on very wide and intelligent reading, often lack something in shading and proportion. I would not say that his treatment even of Anselm or of Grotius (not to speak of thinkers of a lower rank) is exempt from this remark.

More important for consideration is the construction of the doctrine of our redemption which Ritschl presents on his own behalf. There are good reasons why I should here abstain from any pretence of a full discussion or a complete estimate. The mode of discussion which Ritschl adopts, and which constitutes from a certain point of view, one excellence of his work, causes it to become virtually rather a system of Theology than a determination of one doctrinal point. More than this, his treatment may be said to rest at bottom on a special philosophy of religion and on a special conception of the true method in theology; and his principles on both heads, while virtually embodied in the book before us, have only gradually and subsequently been explained fully and in their connection; hence they have created active discussion within the last two or three years. I decline to enter on this wide field, and will confine myself to a line of remark better suited to a magazine article.

Two features of Ritschl's treatment may be mentioned as contributing to the interest and profit of students. One is the thorough independence, and in general the ability, with which he sifts every notion that presents itself. He calls upon each theological alternative, or hypothesis, to answer for its life, at the bar of a relentless dialectic; and no weak grounds—especially no internal inconsistencies—seem to escape his detection. This has great value for a student who is properly prepared, and is able to keep his own feet under him while the process goes on. But I will hazard this remark, viz. that this keen and searching dialectic is not by any means in all cases so solid as at first sight it seems. There are cases, indeed, in which it becomes finical and unworthy, for this reason. It belongs to the nature of theology that in some instances our determinations must content themselves to be approximate. They denote the eternal and infinite objects in a manner which is not false, but yet is not adequate; which conveys a real knowledge, but does not supply sharp mathematical outlines. In all such cases it is possible to do great work in the way of criticism, by demanding a precision and a consistency which

the case does not admit of. We ought not to complain of being reminded that our thought, approaching great and divine objects on this side and that, is imperfect. But we may complain when the critic forgets the limitations which render perfection impossible. For that implies insensibility, for the time, to the conditions on which the grandeur of the theme depends. I will not say that Ritschl is insensible to this necessity in the conduct of his own thinking; but I think he sometimes disregards it in his criticism of the thinking he chooses to discard.

Another stimulating feature of Ritschl's treatment, is the manner in which he insists on connecting the doctrine of the atonement with the experience of the religious life. He insists on its being made clear how the atonement, according to any view of it under discussion, is, actually and worthily, the soul's way to God. And that leads him to weigh the question of this reconciliation in relation to a wide circle of theological positions. He proposes to set the question in the light of every one of the theologoumena which any way bear upon redemption, and to demand in connection with each a connection of thought in virtue of which all shall concur, for the understanding and the heart, in one great religious reconciliation. As he brings the discussion of justification and atonement into relation with the various forms of need by sin—with the various forms of Divine action and relation—with the experiences of trust, assurance, freedom—with the nature of the Divine Being and the ends of His government—with the person of Christ, the states (of Humiliation and Exaltation), and the three offices; as he applies himself to bring out the various respects in which forgiveness is necessary—the various lines along which the action and passion of Christ can influence the problem—and finally, the bearing of atonement in various aspects of the Christian character and attainment—it is impossible not to feel how suggestive this is; and a stimulus is applied to one's thinking on a multitude of topics. To realize this fully—and I may add, to be in a position to judge it safely—one ought to be beforehand well read on all these topics in the theology of the older schools. Such reading is all implied, for it is before the author's mind, and he supposes it to be before his own readers.

But we have to remember that on the principles of a certain philosophy of religion, and along the lines of a certain method of dogmatic, Ritschl is, to a large extent, constructing a theological connection which dictates his result.

In saying a word or two about that result, I wish, first of all, to acknowledge Ritschl's religious interest in his theme. He sets his face steadily towards a blessed future for men, reconciled to God, a future achieved in connection with the actual history of Christ. And there are important sections of Christian experience for which he cherishes manifest sympathy and appreciation.

But in his system, a doubt, if not more than a doubt, hangs over the question of our Lord's Divinity. His discussion of it is very peculiar, and rather tends to hold the question in suspense, and to baffle the reader who wishes to bring it to an ay or no. But I rather agree with one who has read Ritschl closely, and who says, "Ritschl is resolutely ambiguous in his doctrine of Christ's person. So far as we can break down his guard, we find that in spite of the use of the Divine name, as applied to Christ, the school of Ritschl really regard Christ as a uniquely endowed man, and no more" (Mackintosh, *Essays*, p. 139). Let me add that very emphatically the wholly exceptional and unique character of Christ *is* acknowledged.

As to the atonement, it is generally known that Ritschl conceives it in connection with the special importance attached by him to the doctrine of the kingdom of God. There is no difficulty on God's part in forgiving sin, no justice stands in His way; but forgiveness ought to take place in a manner that harmonizes with God's procedure towards the great and final end He has in view. Let me, in a sentence or two, sketch the theory which hence arises.

The loving God has in view for mankind a destiny denoted by the "kingdom of God"—that is, a society in which love to God and one another are triumphantly supreme, so that men are to be set free from all lower forces and necessities, and blessedness in goodness shall prevail. Men, meanwhile, are involved in sin; and the sense of this works by creating apprehension towards God, distrust and alienation, cutting off the trust in God and the fellowship with Him which would operate as the remedial forces. Christ appears, living a life of unbroken love to God and man, enjoying and maintaining the fellowship with God of which human nature is capable. It becomes evident to Him that he has it for His calling to found the kingdom of God referred to. In accepting that calling, He is in perfect unity with God's own end; and He prosecutes it in that perfect love to man, which is God's own will. To follow this out, gathering men into the kingdom, is at once His chosen calling, and the natural unfolding of His own religious life. On His doing so the actual gathering of men into the kingdom, and their upbuilding in it, depends. For God's gracious purpose regarding His kingdom only becomes known and sure to us men, as we see Christ's face steadily set towards it as the very end of His being. And it is on the type of Christ's religion hat our religion is to take shape and inspiration, trusting in God, rising above the world, loving one another. The way of it is this then, that to the members of the community of Christ, forgiveness

of sin is assured, and so fellowship with God is opened to them. The covenant of forgiveness is connected with acceding to the community of Christ. In that community God is to deal with us, and is to train us, on the footing of the assured forgiveness of sins. Now, I have said that to found this kingdom became the calling, the life, the religion of Christ, as it is the final aim of God Himself. But His calling in this respect imposed on Him great trouble in life, and finally, death—which it was His part to take, and which He did take with perfect submission, consent, and love. Had He failed in doing so, the founding of the kingdom would have failed. The community of Christ, with its assured forgiveness of sins, would not have existed. His faithfulness in life and death founded the kingdom. This is the relation of Christ's action and passion to the forgiveness of sins.

This is a bald statement, because I wished to make it a short one. But it gives the essential position. Is it too much to say that this view elaborately—laboriously—evades the main thing?

There may be in the atonement — I deeply believe there is—what outgoes all our analogies and all our thoughts. But surely if we take our conception of the benefit we have by Christ from inspired teaching, we must own this element in it,—that whereas it becomes God, in dealing with those that have sinned, to manifest His dread displeasure with all sin, and yet He, in His great love, would deliver us and set us among the children; therefore Christ coming to bless us bore the strain of that great problem which we had created, bore it with unspeakable love and sorrow, and ended it for us in His sacrifice. I have never been able to see why that apparent teaching of the Scripture should not be thankfully accepted. I am sure that the sense of it is one of the strong cords that bind believers to their Lord. And I never have been able to see how, on other theories, three biblical elements of a believer's experience can reach their biblical fulness and assuredness. These are:—

1. The believer's sense of obligation to Christ, who has saved us by bearing our burden, and dying for our sins.
2. The believer's attitude towards God, as set upon the key of an immortal repentance, and carrying with it the acceptance of the punishment of our iniquities.
3. The believer's conflict with sin, as animated by the consciousness, that his Lord has redeemed him from it.

A large book more lately appeared from Ritschl's pen—a history of Pietism. It is a natural appendix to his treatise on the Atonement, in this way. The Pietists made earnest work with the doctrine of conversion, as bringing men to forgiveness as well as other blessings. On the contrary, in Ritschl's theology the community of Christ to which forgiveness is attached is the visible Church. Therefore every one in the visible Church ought at once, and without more ado, to assume the certainty of forgiveness as the basis of his dealings with God. This may seem to be an extravagant and eccentric position. At the same time, it leads into a great deal of discussion of interesting questions connected with the practical administration of Christianity. These Ritschl connects with the history of Pietism, as an important form of religious movement and manifestation, on behalf of which high claims were made, and *to* which various religious currents of the present day bear more or less affinity. But I must say no more of it.

We may remember Ritschl as one whose thinking surely proved inadequate as regards some great theological interests. But we must also remember the standing admonition he has left us as to the scale of diligence and comprehensiveness of view, as well as the everlasting activity of mind, which the theologian ought to bring to his work. A resolute effort to master and criticise the whole course of previous discussion; a reckoning with the biblical materials, under the conditions of modern exegesis; a comprehensive adjustment of the various provinces of dogmatic bearing on his central problem, were reckoned by Ritschl to be the obligations connected with undertaking to discuss the subject at all. Nor was this all. He owned the obligation to discuss thoroughly the bearing of the whole on practical life and fellowship with God. And he laid the foundation of all his processes in earnest thought about the philosophy, and therefore the essential nature, of religion—and about the proper method of theology. We are not called upon to exaggerate the measure of his success. Indeed, we may be of opinion that fundamental faults of method misled his enterprise. But we may easily grant that so vigorous a mind could not apply itself so diligently and so long without doing service towards the disentangling and arranging of human thought on the questions he treated, and raising into view, topics and aspects of things too much overlooked before. And at all events, few of us can afford to lose the admonition afforded by the conception he embodied in his work, of the range of study and the scale of application which the theologian may bring to the tasks entrusted to him.

We come to another region, and we come to a different man, when we turn to the late Bishop of Durham. The speculative adventurousness, the serious reliance on philosophic positions and conclusions, the lively interest in dogmatic and systematic questions of theology, cease to be conspicuous here; and the gifts which peculiarly qualify for shining in those departments, if they were present, were not remarkably exercised. But

extraordinary industry and learning in the field of ecclesiastical history and criticism were combined here with a magnificent sanity of mind in using his acquirements, and with a most enviable balance of candour and firmness in admitting the claims of genuine proof, and resisting what pretended only to that character. Few men are so equally independent of learned fashions, conservative and radical, as the late bishop was, and yet so free from trace of mere individual self-assertion and eccentricity. All this he united with very unostentatious but very deep and real Christian character, and with a steadfast witness to the main things in Christian religion.

It will be a thousand pities if the mental character and the literary services of Dr. Lightfoot, which were certainly not sensational, should on that account fail to leave their impression on the theological mind, and to stamp their lesson deeply. We are passing through a period in which such lessons are needed. If we are to come creditably and safely through the currents of our time, we shall need men who combine with fearless learning and candour, a similar independence of the literary and critical fashions, that assume to dictate the acceptance of principles and the making of concessions, the grounds for which have not been established. No one ever ventured to accuse Dr. Lightfoot of obscurantism, of shutting his eyes, of preferring half knowledge to whole. Yet he was able during his whole learned life to occupy a position altogether helpful to the believing Church, defensive of positive beliefs and of the great Christian interests.

Apart from what has now been referred to, the qualities of this scholar are well worth commemorating.

Of the thoroughness of his scholarship no one, perhaps, can form an adequate impression, who has not closely followed his way of dealing with some of the texts he edited. His chosen field was the first two centuries. But his scholarship embraced not merely an extraordinary mastery of all that could be known of facts and writings of that period, but a mastery also of everything that from all quarters could be put in play to afford illustration and explanation. From point to point of the author in hand, the sense of resource grew upon you as one question after another was taken up, as the thin subtle lines of connection—lexical, grammatical, literary, historical, antiquarian, philosophical—multiplied and wove themselves between his text on the one hand, and the life and thought of the old world on the other; and as the dry, barren, unproductive, and unsuggestive sentences grew significant, interesting, and fruitful under his hand.

But more remarkable still was the justness of his view. It was not merely that he saw everything, but that he discerned so well the true bearings of what he saw. That is the mark of an essentially thorough and an essentially fair mind, able to place itself frankly and sympathetically in relation with the actual thought and speech of the bygone time. For such a mind also every new acquisition — every item of scholarship has a tenfold value; it comes easily and naturally, because really and veraciously, into relation with what has been already acquired; and so, what light it has to yield is utilized at once. Hence the completeness and masterfulness with which Dr. Lightfoot could rectify confusions, and furnish the point of view from which regions of learning were to be understood. Some of the most striking examples, perhaps, are furnished by the series of papers in the *Contemporary Review* on the book called *Supernatural Religion*. Those are now accessible in a collected form. They ought to be in the hands of students as a model of the manner in which a strong and clear man comes into an occasional debate, and turns it into an occasion of durable instruction. The author of *Supernatural Religion* had read enormously. He knew a great number of things in that way. They all catalogued themselves in his mind, in relation to their fitness to subvert *Supernatural Religion*. They were, like masses of projectiles, stored up in heaps, ready to be shot out upon faith. But though he knew a great deal in that way, he had little of the knowledge of a man who has actually lived in a country, and knows the people and the houses and the roads. But Dr. Lightfoot had. If I am to produce an instance out of many, I would refer you to his discussion of the principles on which the references of Eusebius to books of Scripture, and to previous notices of such books, are to be understood and used. Those articles abound in lessons, the value of which consists not merely in the results, but in the insight they afford into the true method of sound and fruitful learning.

Of the candour which characterized his studies and his thinking, a very well-known instance is furnished by the position he took up on the subject of the early history of the episcopate. It is not merely that he made what, from the point of view of his Church, might be reckoned a concession, but that he came out so frankly with all he thought about it, set forth his grounds without hesitation or *arrière pensée*, and made it perfectly clear why he went so far and where he stopped. He did it like a fair man and also like a strong man.

It has been said of him truly, that his width and thoroughness of attainment depended much on this, that while his natural aptitudes were great, he began early, he took the right method of building well-grounded knowledge, and he never diverged from the true path. For the sake of students, it may be suggested that probably there was a time when Dr. Lightfoot did not know how far he

might have opportunity to carry the kind of investigation which, in fact, occupied his life; but he began to assemble knowledge round one point of interest, as any of us might begin to do, kept order and relation in his studies by organizing them in relation to that point or object, and found his dominion over the earliest Christian antiquity grow, till it reached, as John Bunyan says, the bigness which we see. But the one point must have been well chosen. I will suggest to you that it probably was the Epistles of Ignatius. Those Epistles with their curious history have created, perhaps, more discussion than they are worth. And Dr. Lightfoot's edition of them, which is a miracle of completeness and a perfect model of investigation, I have some difficulty in regarding, after all, with perfect complacency. Has it not absorbed too much of the learned resource of a precious life? Notwithstanding, the whole cluster of questions which gather about Ignatius are beyond all question remarkable, fitted to set a man on to investigations that may fructify in other and much more important directions. Now, Dr. Lightfoot has told us that in 1885 the Ignatian question had occupied him for about thirty years; and in another place he makes this remark, "The Ignatian Epistles are an exceptionally good training ground for the student of early literature and history;"—probably therefore he had found them to be such.—"They present in typical and instructive forms the most varied problems—textual, exegetical, doctrinal, historical. One who has thoroughly grasped these problems will be placed in the possession of a master key, which will open to him vast storehouses of knowledge." One sees the moral. We will not dispute as to the value, proportionately, of Ignatius for his own sake. But we gather this lesson. If any one conceives the honourable ambition of doing something in the field of learning, ecclesiastical or theological, let him select some object of study, and organize his reading, thinking, and writing round that. It need not be of itself of the first importance. But *if it is well chosen*, it may be the point of departure for a life of enterprise constantly growing in interest and in vitality. If, providentially, the student is arrested at any point—still his work up to that point is coherent, relatively complete, and worth his pains; if he is permitted to go on, it grows continually in attractiveness as well as in width and depth.

The question whether it was well to expend so much force and time on the edition of Ignatius, suggests the other question whether it was well to expend so select a scholar as Dr. Lightfoot on the miscellaneous duties of the Bishop of Durham. One must defer much to his own judgment on that point. It was no unworthy view which led the scholar and teacher to feel the call to the cure of souls in a great diocese to be imperative. At the same time one regrets it; for it not only abridged his labours in the field of ecclesiastical learning, but it arrested completely what he designed in the exposition of the Epistles. There may be expositors who penetrate more profoundly into the theology and into the peculiar genius of the Apostle Paul. But when in regard to the various questions which gather round the Galatians, Philippians, Colossians, either as to their historical setting, or as to the fair interpretation of difficult passages, one conceives the desire to know what a mind furnished with abundant knowledge and exceptionally true and just in its working would say to such a question, the eye travels of itself to the corner of the library where Lightfoot's volumes stand.

A few words must be said of Dr. Hatch. Perhaps of the three, one is more inclined to mourn his removal than that of either of the others. And that not because of finding oneself in complete sympathy with his points of view or modes of view. Rather one seemed often to miss something. But partly his loss is mourned so emphatically for this reason, that more of his work seemed yet to lie in the future: we had, as it were, but begun to get what he could give us. Partly, however, and still more, one mourns because he was one of those few men—few indeed—who brought to his work a perfectly fresh eye. I have spoken of Dr. Lightfoot's justness of view. I do not know that I would ascribe that in the same degree to Hatch. But in a quite remarkable degree he had freshness of view. And that is a quality of extraordinary value. For when such a man brings up his new perception of an old problem, it is easy for us all to find plenty of solid, prosaic, steady-going sense with which to hem it in, and indeed drown it, if it deserves that fate. But how few of us all could provide the element *he* contributes! Let it be observed that I am speaking of something quite different from eccentricity of view. That again is comparatively easy to be had. But Hatch was an instance of the man who, in the line of real, solid, first-hand knowledge and investigation, perceives fresh aspects of old things, and notes their significance for the studious modern world.

Who could believe that anything fresh could be said or suggested upon the question of the government of the earliest Church, and the view to be taken of bishops and presbyters. We were not agreed, but we knew so well all that could be said. It had been all debated, over and over debated, out of all proportion to the real weight of the question, or the value of any conclusions that hung upon it. The same old straw had been thrashed again and again. Since the days of Blondel's *Apologia* or Hammond's *Dissertationes*, we had gone on pelting one another with weary iteration, so that it made one mournful to have, for any purpose, to go over the well-trodden ground

again. Hatch's book came out, and—almost incredible to say—one found oneself looking at it all from a new point of view. All the old familiar scenery presented itself at a somewhat different angle and at a new perspective; one felt oneself drawn and bound to make a new reckoning with all the old authorities, and make a new estimate of results. Now it does not matter at all to my present purpose, though it should be pleaded that Dr. Hatch looked too exclusively from the side on which he thus approached the object—saw things a little too exclusively in that peculiar light. Very likely. I am myself disposed to think and say so. Only it must be observed that was in a manner his business. It was his special contribution. But let it be so. The important thing was that it was a new aspect—a new line of approach, a new connection of facts and principles, a new road by which to come down on the old positions. It was a remarkable coincidence that just then the Διδαχη fell in, to complete and confirm the impression that there was really something new.

And I repeat this was not a work of mere eccentric guess-making. It was the fruit of solid first-hand learning in a man who made fresh pathways through the forests of antiquity, and who, I repeat it once more, wherever he came applied a fresh eye.

He remained only long enough to let us see that he was able to perform similar service for us in many another region of ecclesiastical research. He would have taught us, or forced us, to open our minds to sides of things heretofore overlooked. I repeat that I do not pretend always to have been in perfect sympathy with his modes of thinking. But I respected his thoroughness, his first-hand independence; I appreciated his freshness of vision, and I mourn his loss.

Students and divines may own something animating in feeling that the actual strain and exertion of mind, goes on with reference to the great and various themes which are the objects of our science. If notable labourers are passing away, still their work admonishes us that more work remains to do, for all that has been spoken of is only a part—these various labours only so many fragments—of the great work which the Church has in hand, in so far as it is her mission to confront the inquiring and labouring human mind with just views and just impressions of the great history of redemption. Other animating influences there are, in the discoveries of fresh material which are being made, and in the feeling, impossible to resist, that we may be, must be, on the verge of more. Some day the five books of Papias, some day the book on heresies of Justin Martyr, some day Hegesippus may turn up. Anything may turn up, and set us all agoing afresh. There are also sources of a deeper interest, and reasons for a graver enthusiasm. We are passing through a time in which there is in a sense a co-operative effort to sift Christianity, its books, its doctrines, its methods, its fruits, down to the very last fibre, by the same methods and with the same severity with which any other religion would be tested. In that effort, believers, as well as unbelievers, are engaged with a tacit consent—carrying on what must be, what cannot help being, processes of dissection on objects which involve the most living and the most sacred of interests. I have not a word to say against the inevitableness, the necessity, the obligation that this process should go on, and the final advantage that many come by it; though perhaps much needs to be laid to heart as to the spirit in which we may take part in it. But it creates a very peculiar form of experience for the Church of Christ. And if it is to be happily traversed, a succession of grave and earnest thinkers and students must be looked for, who will carry down to the future the best qualities of those who have been taken away.

A Suggested Exposition of Rev. xiii. 18.

By the Rev. W. T. Lynn, B.A.

It may seem a wild idea to make another attempt to explain the six hundred three score and six of Rev. xiii. 18; but I hope I may be read before being condemned.

It seems to me, then, that Hengstenberg makes a very wise suggestion on the subject, but does not draw the right conclusion. "Here," he remarks, "we must not wander after our own imaginations. The Seer of the Apocalypse lives entirely in Holy Scripture. On this territory, therefore, is the solution of the sacred riddle to be sought." He then goes on to find in the name of Adonikam, whose "sons," or rather descendants, in Ezra ii. 13, are given as six hundred sixty and six in number. But may I call attention to that number in 1 Kings x. 14, where it represents the number of talents of gold which came to Solomon in one year. The luxury and extravagance thus brought in corrupted the heart of the king himself, who, considered the model of wisdom, gave way, led astray by wealth and its consequences, to wickedness and idolatry in his old age. May not the number in question there represent worldliness and covetousness, of which Christ our Lord taught us so especially to take heed and beware.

Additional probability is given to this by the preceding verse in Revelation (xiii. 17), where the votaries of this are described as the worshippers of the beast and of his image.