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I. REVIVALS OF RELIGION.

The word Revival implies the previous existence of life ; more properly, it means resuscitation or resurrection from the dead. But according to usage, and with reference to the secondary meanings of the word *life*, it means calling into active exercise a life which has become torpid or has been slumbering. Hence, it has special application to the church, not to the world outside. In Acts 2: 41 ff. we have an account of a revival in the proper sense of the word ; for all the statements there concern the members of the visible church of God. What is commonly called a revival—a general religious movement among the unregenerate—was called by our fathers an “awakening.” There is a sense in which such an awakening may be called a revival, to-wit : a revival of God’s work, (Hab. 3 : 2)—that work of salvation, of calling in His elect—which He has been doing from the beginning. This work seems at times, and in some places, almost to cease ; the Lord seems to abandon His church and give it up to the power of Satan, as in the days of Elijah, at the crucifixion of Jesus, and in the “Dark Ages.” Then comes a time of reviving, a great movement among the dry bones, and a great multitude stand up for the Lord. (Josh. 24—1 Sam. 12.—Judg. 2.—1 Chron. 29.—Hezekiah, Josiah, the Maccabees, Pentecost, the Wilderness, the Brethren of the Common Lot, the Reformation, the Kirk of Shotts, Northampton,

is clear; the sacredness of human life is expressly grounded in the image of God. But Atheism reduces man to the level of the brute, differing from the latter in degree only; it sweeps away all essential distinction between them; man becomes then merely a wondrously developed beast. If there were no God, we confess we could see no more intrinsic crime in slaying a man than in killing a horse. True, such a conception seems impossible to us; impossible because of those "moral intuitions" to which our author refers; *but the beast has no moral intuitions*. This suggests a very pertinent question, Whence come these absolute moral intuitions? The answer is decisive.

Be it remembered, however, that these objections do not obtain against the argument as a whole, but only against certain details of it; details, moreover, that are somewhat of the nature, or effect at least, of digression. This suspicion of irrelevance suggests a criticism on our author's style; we fear he lacks clearness, his thought seems clear but his expression is at times really obscure; the book exacted more study than it ought to have done, and we feel by no means sure, even now, that we have fully caught the Professor's meaning in every instance. We repeat, however, that the points we have felt constrained to criticise unfavorably are minor blemishes; the work is an excellent one and will serve to strengthen the faith and hope of many in these days of aggressive infidelity and insinuating pessimism. We cordially thank the author for his tonic and heartsome treatment of Theism, as well and equally for his trenchant and vigorous satire on the crudities and contradictions, the emptiness and insolence of Atheism.

SAMUEL M. SMITH.

PROF. BRUCE'S "MIRACULOUS ELEMENT IN THE GOSPELS," ETC.

THE MIRACULOUS ELEMENT IN THE GOSPELS. A Course of Lectures on the "Ely Foundation," delivered in Union Theological Seminary, by *Alexander Balmain Bruce, D. D., Professor of Apologetics and New Testament Exegesis in Free Church College, Glasgow*. New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son, 714 Broadway. 1887.

THE PARABOLIC TEACHING OF CHRIST. A Systematic and Critical Study of the Parables of our Lord, by *the same*. Third Revised Edition. New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son, 714 Broadway. 1887.

THE HUMILIATION OF CHRIST, In its Physical, Ethical and Official Aspects. The Sixth Series of the Cunningham Lectures. By *the same*. New York: A. C. Armstrong & Son. 1887.

Professor Bruce has now added another to the series of works, each occupying a rather portly octavo volume, which has made him famous as a theological writer all over the English-speaking world. The present contribution in no way falls short of its predecessors in learning or ability, or in freshness of presentation, and is in some respects the most notable if not also the most debatable of the entire series. The subject

of this profoundly interesting and highly instructive discussion, is the *Miraculous Element in the Gospels*. The work, though constructed on a different method, is regarded by the author as a companion to his former work on *The Parabolic Teaching of Christ*. In the fifth and sixth lectures on the miracles, a considerable number of the miraculous narratives are brought under thorough examination, and important remarks are made on nearly all such narratives of the Gospels. The author's object in those chapters is, however, not to undertake a homiletic exposition of the whole of each narrative, but to investigate the *reality of the alleged miracle*, or miracles, in each particular case.

The miracles are first considered by Doctor Bruce in their most general aspect, and more especially in relation to theories of the universe. They are then taken up in their relations to the order of nature; to the apostolic witnesses; to the evangelic records; to exegesis; to the worker, and to the Christian revelation. The Gospel miracles in relation to Exegesis, is the topic of two chapters, the fifth and sixth; in the first of which there is a special treatment given to what the author styles "the healing miracles of the triple tradition," and in the second to what he calls, in the chapter-title, "the miracles wrought on nature," but more commonly "the nature-miracles." The final chapters (the ninth and tenth) are entitled respectively, "The great moral miracle," and "Christianity without miracle."

In the preface this bold disputant utters a note of warning for the benefit of those who might otherwise very naturally mistake his meaning. Readers are apprized that "throughout the discussions in this volume the Gospels are regarded not from the view-point of a strict doctrine of inspiration, but from that of substantial historicity." The writer adds: "It is not dogmatically the highest point of view, but it is that which is most germane to apologetic inquiries." This caution was by no means a needless one, as without it the majority of Professor Bruce's orthodox critics might well have been excused for setting him down as an opponent of the good old doctrine of the divine plenary inspiration of the Holy Scriptures; and even as the matter now stands, it is not easy to perceive how the respected and admired author could, with adequate success, defend himself against such an accusation. It must nevertheless be allowed that he here seems to wish to be understood as personally holding "a strict doctrine" on this all-important subject, and explicitly avows the conviction that "it is" ("dogmatically," at least,) "the highest point of view" from which the Gospels can be regarded.

The earlier chapters of the book are masterly and admirable. All the modern theories of the universe, and several of the most prominent contemporary thinkers of Europe and America, are submitted to a thorough and remorseless examination. The discussion of the views of Strauss, of Spencer, and of Fishe, leaves little or nothing to be desired. Of evolution he says: "I feel no jealousy of the doctrine

* * * and see no occasion for cherishing such a feeling." Though not pretending to deal with evolution on purely scientific grounds, he owns that he is impressed by the grandeur of the view which it gives us of the universe, and that he is not indisposed to believe it, and is fully prepared, in the event the doctrine should be established, "to acknowledge the obligation to adjust our whole mode of thinking on religious questions to the new situation."* He assents to Dr. Matheson's spirited attempt to justify the position that the old religious faith can live with the new scientific faith; † and adds, "Evolution, as I understand it, excludes neither God nor the knowledge of God."‡ The accuracy of the last averment depends entirely on the definition that is accepted of evolution. The position taken up is almost manifestly indefensible, if by evolution is meant evolution as expounded by Charles Darwin. If, on the other hand, by evolution be meant evolution as expounded by certain Christian theists, (as, for example, Dr. Matheson himself, or Professor LeConte) the denial that evolution excludes God, or (in a certain sense) the knowledge of God, would itself hardly meet with contradiction in any intelligent quarter. But as Principal Smith pointed out so clearly in the Belfast Council, during the debate on the papers of Dr. Matheson, Professor Salmon and Dr. Young, the vital point of interest is not the question whether evolution in some form is consistent with theism, but the question whether evolution in any of its current forms can be reconciled with the declarations of God's inspired word. How important it is to know exactly what is to be understood by the term evolution will be evident from the fact reported in this volume,‡ that Dr. Cleland, of the University of Glasgow, contends for "a definite evolution issuing in 'terminal forms,' and guided by morphological design." He is represented as viewing the animal kingdom not as an indefinite growth like a tree, but as a "temple with many minarets, none of them capable of being prolonged, while the central dome is completed by the structure of man." || Precisely what is intended by this last statement it would be hard to say, but the general idea of the Scottish expert will be apt to strike some of the readers of this review as not unlike the one developed in Professor Drummond's famous effort to identify natural and spiritual laws.

Doctor Bruce comes out in all his strength in the second chapter, where he considers miracles in relation to the order of nature. Nearly everything he says in this chapter may be accepted without abatement or qualification. Too much praise perhaps is bestowed upon Bushnell, and too little upon Mozley, and yet the statements of Mozley as well as those of Bushnell must sometimes be taken *cum grano*. Our author, without appearing to weaken the relative apologetic value of the miracles, as Trench does, agrees fully with Trench in laying stress on the assertion that the "signs" of the New Testament are not to be regarded as mere credentials, and thus as accidents of the revelation,

* Page 27. † Page 28. ‡ Page 28. § Page 28—Foot-note. || Ditto.

but as divine lessons—and thus part and parcel of the very *substance* of the revelation. Dr. Bruce also agrees with Trench in thinking even more of the symbolical and spiritual instructiveness of our Lord's mighty works than of their bare probative efficacy.

The later Bampton Lectures of Dr. Row, where this attitude is the one assumed, are accordingly preferred to the earlier Bampton Lectures of Dr. Mozley, where the opposite attitude of the older apologists is the one presented and maintained. Bushnell's somewhat fantastic definition of the supernatural (agreeably to which it would be a supernatural act to fly a kite or even to cut a stick of wood) is commended above its deserts, but is also shrewdly criticised when viewed as a complete solution of the problem of miracles in their relation on the one hand to nature and on the other hand to God. It has been too often overlooked, and apparently even by the Duke of Argyll in "The Reign of Law," that Babbage's argument from his calculating machine, in the ninth Bridgewater Treatise, is strictly applicable rather to the doctrine of special providences than to the doctrine of miracles. The same remark holds true of Mozley's illustration of the clock, and of the Duke of Argyll's illustration from the strap of an omnibus, or the throttle-valve of a locomotive steam-engine. Such is the case unless, with Mozley, we make no difference in our definitions between a miracle and a special intervention of God in his ordinary providence, except that in the one case we *know* that the law of nature has been controlled *ab extra* and that in the other case we do *not*. Mozley indeed would make a sort of miracle out of every instance of a special providence, whereas upon his own premisses the true state of the facts would appear to be that the greatest miracles of the New Testament are after all only a more conspicuous and startling variety of special providences. Mozley is sharply and justly taken to task by Dr. Bruce, following in the wake of the author of "Supernatural Religion," for his concession to Hume that the impression we all have from birth of the stability and uniformity of nature is simply an unintelligent *instinct*. But no notice is taken by Dr. Bruce of Mozley's terrific argument *ad hominem* by which Hume's noted sophism is completely demolished. For if miracles are in violation of the uniformity of nature, what of that *if our conviction* of that uniformity be due to an irrational instinct?

The discussion in this volume of the theory of concentric circles of *law*, is a particularly striking and satisfactory one. Everything again depends on what one means. If the reference be to the *moral* laws prescribed by infinite wisdom and justice, of course every act of God, and consequently his miraculous acts are regulated by a higher law than those which govern physical nature. But if the reference be to some imagined system of *physical* laws superior to the laws of the natural world with which we are now acquainted, there is no solid evidence of the existence or operation of any such transcendent laws as those. Besides, this hypothesis would

demand, as in Babbage's engine, a recurrence at stated periods of the miraculous phenomena. It was apparently to meet such a difficulty in the case of the *moral* laws which regulate the divine procedure, that Jonathan Edwards contended that if the same conditions recurred God would do again what he did before with the unvarying certainty with which a stone falls to the ground when it is repeatedly dropped from the hand.

The distinction between a miracle and a special providence appears to be in this, that in a special providence the law of nature is *employed*, whereas in a miracle it is *superseded*.

The exceptions most likely to be taken to this book concern the discussions contained in the immediately succeeding chapters, and particularly the discussions of the third and fourth, where the miracles of the Gospels are considered in their relation to the apostolic witnesses, and to the evangelic record. Here more than anywhere else we shall do well to bear in mind the author's caveat, that he is occupying the low ground of the apologist rather than the high ground of the dogmatic theologian. The exhibit that is here made of the good intentions and plausibility of some of the most dangerous forms of hostile contemporary criticism is a brilliant and enticing one. Such English writers as Baden Powell, the younger Mill, the authors of "Essays and Reviews" and "Supernatural Religion," and such German writers as Paulus, Strauss, Baur, Holtzmann, Keim, Weizacker, and above all, Weiss, receive ample and dispassionate, often favorable, attention. The author's single object is to vindicate the reality and value of the miracles even if he has to give up everything else. Professor Bruce's animadversion upon Mozley because of his concessions to Hume may here be retorted against Dr. Bruce himself because of his own concessions to the destructive critics. Papias mentions the Logia of Matthew. Are we on that account to follow the Gallios of the naturalistic criticism in getting *everything* out of the Logia, even the "Matthew" of the *alleged* evangelist? The author may not be ready on all grounds to admit this and similar conclusions, but he certainly writes as if he was not aware of any paramount reason for thinking to the contrary. He expressly notes his preference for the modern plan of abandoning all attempts to harmonize the statements of the evangelists, and to attribute their numerous errors on minor points to an imperfect but honest use of earlier documents. After having to all intents and purposes cut away masts, bowsprit and rudder, and thrown the greater part of the cargo into the sea, our author fondly hopes that he has at least saved the keel and the capstan.

The writer well says that in Strauss and Baur skepticism reached its high-water mark. The *negative* criticism of Paulus and Strauss, and the so-styled *historical* criticism of Baur, Keim and Beyschlag, receive a lucid and fascinating treatment at the hands of our author, who is himself nothing if not frank, manly and critical.

More positive opinions of his own on such vital matters as the inspired verity of the sacred records would have been inconsistent with Dr. Bruce's peculiar scheme in this book, but would have given him a stronger standing-ground for unimpeachable orthodoxy. The fact plainly stares us in the face that, with the best motives in the world, the Glasgow professor has, perhaps inadvertently, made grave concessions to error in the supposed interests of the truth.

The final chapters of the volume (the eighth, ninth and tenth) on the Gospel miracles in their relation to Revelation, on the Great Moral Miracle and on Christianity without miracle, are highly impressive.

Few words are called for in reference to the three other works in this series, as they have all been before the reading public for some years. The standard work on the Parables has gone to its third edition; and the outward form given to it by the Messrs. Armstrong is one that is characteristically good and pleasant to the eyes. No material change has been made in the text. The treatment of the parables of our Lord is systematic, broadly, original, and as to the tone, confident and authoritative. For Trench's allegorizing Fathers, we have the brightest lights, true or false, of modern Germany. The result is a work that is at once critical and practical.

In "The Humiliation of Christ," Dr. Bruce broke new ground in English dogmatics, but was not without fore-runners and guides on the continent of Europe. His view is that the doctrine of "The Humiliation" is fundamental; and that our Saviour though sinless was *weak* and capable of mental and moral as well as physical development and discipline. The exhibition and criticism of the subtle *Kenosis* theories—ancient and modern—and of the tenets of the Lutheran and Reformed churches on this whole subject are singularly clear and able. The entire region through which the discussion moves is beset with pitfalls of the most hazardous speculation. Dr. Bruce's positions are often startling, and at times precarious, but are on the whole evidently meant to be conservative.

H. C. ALEXANDER.

DR. FAIRBAIRN'S "MORALITY."

OF THE DOCTRINE OF MORALITY IN ITS RELATION TO THE GRACE OF REDEMPTION. *By Robert B. Fairbairn, D. D., L.L.D., Warden of St. Stephen's College, Annandale, N. Y.* New York: Thomas Whittaker, 2 and 3 Bible House. 1887. 12 mo., pp. 331.

The title of this work is attractive. The book undertakes to supply a felt want. It is of great importance that the connexion should be distinctly pointed out in a Christian country between systems of Morality and the scheme of redemption. In some respects the author has made good his design. We think that he ought to have emphasized some distinctions, which he has omitted to notice. He uses the term *Morality* as generic, including Moral Philosophy, Ethics, and