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MACKINTOSH ON THE PERSON OF CHRIST.*

By REV. PRINCIPAL FORSYTH, D.D.

I have just come to this book from the reading of Meredith's letters, wherein, as in all such cases, the chief problem in my mind is one of explanation. How are we to account for the attitude taken to Christianity and the Church by such able and even gifted men as Meredith and his set? It is easy, of course, for anyone with the proper knowledge to criticise their ignorance, so disproportionate to their dogmatism and their scorn poured on the Christian faith and system. They seem in most cases to have known and cared to know nothing of any but the most popular forms and parodies of it. If it were a matter of philosophy or science they would not have wasted their thinking time on the amateurs who make their hobby or the retailers who make paragraphs of it. But when it was a case of the philosophy of faith and the realities of religion they seem to have made no effort to discover what was to be said by the giants, or even the competent, in that kind. In such respect they are beneath criticism, and could only be sent to school. But they make a problem all the same. They call for explanation. Everyone who takes Christianity even from its ill-found expositors does not come out with their attitude to it. What did they miss in the Christianity they stumbled on? What angered them? What started their contempt? What made them turn from piety to poetry, and from faith to romance? Granting that they show a certain stiff and hard-bitten type of intellect, the vigour and rigour order of mind; that they meet Hard Church by hard school; that they have a drawn and defiant expression in their religious features; that they display a dreadful lack of fear, not to mention love, in the presence of the power that rolls through all; that even in that presence they stand as "gentlemen unafraid"; and that they exhibit more grim promptitude in lashing out than fine patience in talking in—that may be, after all, but the Philistine side of a realism which is not always unwholesome; because it does insist, in its slapdash way, on getting at facts, or such facts as it can understand. And it is here that we find the explanation which is so much more useful than even criticism. What they missed in such Christianity as reached them was moral realism. They missed the note of reality. They knew nothing of the Church's inner life. And the theology, the apologetic, the sentiment of such religion as they lighted upon in Early Victorian Evangelicalism, was much out of contact with the realities of life and the truths of knowledge as these came home to forthright natures on the one hand or men of genius on the other. There was a quality too forensic and too little moral about its conception of the Cross of Christ; and the flaw in that fact spread outward into an unreality which was bound to sicken unconsciously the whole religious area, radiating as it did from a centre so creative for the type of faith. But by God's grace we are moving deeper into a time when religion shall be of no final use unless it set us on life's last reality, plant the conscience on the moral centre of Eternity, and give us that command of things which reality alone can give—and moral reality above all. Only it is not such reality as comes home to the scientist or the pragmatist, but that which at once pierces the soul from the centre of the moral universe, and settles it secure over all the fires of conscience and the floods of fate.

II.

Again, we are now happily past the day when religion had to fight for its life against a scientific materialism which saw in it but superstition. Among other influences, the study of pagan faiths has convinced the thinking world that religion is an essential element in humanity—to go no farther than that.

* The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ. By R. H. Mackintosh, Ph.D., D.D., Professor of Theology, New College, Edinburgh. (International Theological Library) nos. 62. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1912.

Physics has opened sub-atomic depths that before were sealed, which form at least a vestibule for the spiritual world. Psychology reveals in the mind itself an interior abyss, where we cannot hear the fall of the stones we drop into it, but we do catch the murmurs and scents of another sea. The literature also of last century developed the sense of the super-rational—of the world's wonder and the soul's romance, in a way which has powerfully affected the type of faith itself. And the spread, culture, and even idolatry of music everywhere has developed to an extreme the subjectivity and intimacy of the spiritual type. And so Religion of a certain spiritual kind, at once grandiose and inward, has a place which it certainly did not have even half a century ago. And, indeed, we are in more danger from a vague but passionate Gnosis now than we were from a dark and indigent Agnosticism then. Religious temperament is mistaken for spiritual insight, and impressive talent for the grasp of faith.

It is therefore quite beside the mark, and it has the futility of bad marksmanship, to spend time now in pleading the claims of religion. The Christian preacher has more to do with faith and godliness than with religion. In many cases we need rescue from religion rather than for it. What threatens religion most is its own dim and vaporous forms which wrap the soul either in sunny cloud or rolling mist, rot it in warm moisture, and soak with sentiment the conscience. It should search and quicken with the Spirit. It is not the influence, nor even the supremacy, of religion we have now to contend for; it is the influence and supremacy of positive religion, characteristic religion, as Eucken calls it, historic religion, living faith, religion with a right to reign greater even than its power to win, the religion of a moral realism that takes up life with both hands and weighs the actual central moral case of the race and of the soul.

Thus the passion for reality becomes hotter than ever at a time when the unwordedness of religion will take denial less and less. Is there any religion which combines these two things, and gives us the deepest mystic intimacy with the last moral reality? Our last ground must be sought in our inmost man. Where is that interior castle? In what depth is the haunt of the eternal voice? Is it mystic or moral, of the temperament or the conscience? Is it in the spiritual imagination or the conscience of the holy?

III.

Christianity is evangelical as it answers that question for the conscience and stakes everything there—as it handles the guilt that baffles mere piety and taxes all the religions. If Christianity do not make its case good there, no other faith can among known creeds; and we are left groping for some new configuration of the mere religiosity or spirituality which is the nebular hypothesis of the soul. The final test of Christianity is not its probable success, at a future more or less remote, in dealing directly with the social question, but it is its power to handle the moral problem present at the core of the social. Its last success will not be in dealing with poverty, but in dealing with the guilt which outlines poverty and still gives the moral cry its mystic persistency and depth. What we need for a religion of spiritual reality is the mysticism of the Conscience. It is the inwardness of a world of moral action. Have we a God and Saviour in the terms of this last mystic moral realism? Is He its last word for the conscience of the whole world in its actual plight? Is eternal reality revealed in such moral realism as is the note of the Bible, or is that, too, but a phase of things? And is there sure foundation for any such mystic intimacy as the Gospel opens with its Eternal Life?

To all such questions the faith of the New Testament answers with Christ. Nothing gets so near, so home, to us as conscience; and nothing can be so sublime and royal. And Christ re-created the conscience from its centre on an eternal scale. It was the one comprehensive thing He did. The one thing the human race needed to have done for it could only be done by its God; and it was done, and is daily being done,

in human experience by Jesus Christ's cross. His victory is gained once for all because it is victory in the central moral tragedy of the race, not to say, with Paul and the pessimists, of existence. He opened a new region not simply of experience, but of reality, intrinsic to the soul and yet its Eternal Master.

So ethical is the nature of the questions to be answered by any revelation that meets the facts of our case, and especially by any theology which is to be at once historic to the past and positive to the present. If holiness is the one interest of the world, sin is the one problem; and it must be neither pooh-poohed nor beweped, but destroyed in a moral re-creation. Theology must be moralised, and not banished, if religion is to be relevant to the soul. If the central doctrine of Christianity cannot be stated in such terms, and founded in the tragedy of the conscience, no credal archæology, no mere repositioning even of the New Testament, no juristic system, no metaphysic of substance, can save it. A re-statement, or a re-adjustment of it, to the divine conscience, is long overdue. For lack of it Christianity is being outdone. But there are signs that even in this country the work is already in hand—the potent, vital, thankless work of moralising Christian belief, of de-rationalising it, of de-sentimentalising it, of reinterpreting it from the moral centre and crisis of the universe in the holiness of God. It is true enough that some of those who most flee life's moral realities seek refuge in holiness; but such abuse does not destroy the fact that the holy love of God is the last word of moral reality for the whole world, and therefore the last secret of the Eternal Son of God.

IV.

From this ethical point of view Dr. Mackintosh's book is of unusual value; and indeed it should anticipate most others on the subject for English use. It frankly professes to be an effort to reconstruct (shall we rather say, re-interpret, or, with the author elsewhere, remind?) the central doctrine of Christianity. It approaches it from the moral soul. Yet we are not to be arrested in ethical categories; and we are driven to metaphysic as we come nearer to reality. But the metaphysic is the energetic metaphysic of moral action, and not the static metaphysic of monistic being. The author deals well with the conception of Jesus as genius, and leaves it behind. The whole value of Christ turns at last on His redemptive, re-creative value for the universal conscience. It is significant for this that the miraculous birth is not mentioned in the text of the book, though it is handled and accepted in an appendix; the pre-existence, though real, is held to be interstitial, since it cannot be experienced as the post-existence is (p. 445); while the doctrine of the two natures is dismissed, with some sound criticism, as impossible except to a rudimentary psychology and a crude idea of personality. It is either wrecked on the Scylla of a duplex personality or sucked into the Charybdis of an impersonal manhood (p. 296). The foundation of the doctrine is not in the cradle, but the cross.

The treatment, in the first part, of the New Testament base is marked by thorough and critical knowledge of what has been done, by firm caution, great reasonableness, and the true historic sense (though I do not think he does justice to Holsten). The writer has a sound eye for outward methods. He is an evangelical modernist, and an instructed Scribe of the Kingdom. His review, in the second part, of the development of this doctrine in the Church is compressed, but it should become the primer for an adequate knowledge of that part of the subject. His chapter on the Christology of the nineteenth century is specially good, and exemplary of the author's happy combination of criticism and appreciation. But the power, the sympathy, the fine reasonableness, the dialectic acumen, and the ethical quality of the author's spiritual mind comes home to us most in the third and reconstructive division, which is about half the book. The author is keen to vindicate the prime necessity of a Christology for a Church, else we treat the Lord of our faith with less respect than Science treats Nature; and he will not "permit the poor average of faith to set itself up as criticism." "We have to catch not the lowest form of belief compatible with a profession of Christianity, but some-

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THE LADY MARRIED A SEQUEL TO THE LADY OF THE DECORATION

thing of the incredible wonder of the Jesus who ransomed us with His blood." The intimate connection of this doctrine with personal faith is presented in a variety of changing and brilliant lights, shooting through an atmosphere of singular lucidity and quiet. It reflects the calm, judicial, and kindly atmosphere of a well-taught mother Church whose existence is not challenged or threatened by a raw and reckless modernism that saps its confidence from within its gates. Only a redeemed man, he says, with Herrmann, can really believe in the Incarnation.

The link between the Incarnate and the Soul is therefore found in the Atonement and the moral crisis of the old Humanity and the creative centre of the new. The Incarnation is neither an idea nor the symbol of an idea; it is an act and a Gospel, at once a moral act and a mystic Gospel. Otherwise, it is a mere theophany for those who are minded that way. The confession of Christ's Godhead flows from us before we know it as we are made by His work, and any progress we make in the reconstruction of its doctrine is produced by its reconstruction of us. For Christ's relation to God is what we are required to believe, not by our reason upon fact, but by our redemption in spirit and in truth.

On the other hand, Dr. Mackintosh grasps the modern difficulty of believing (amid a world now so vast) in the cosmic position of Christ as the Divine Agent in Creation and the unifying principle of finite Being. And he sees that such a position is impossible if the unifying principle is an extended substance, or a suffusing thought, and not an eternal moral act of love at the re-creative centre of things, "the organising centre of that world of values by which faith lives." "Redemption and creation constitute a spiritual unity."

It is attractive to a certain order of mind (Strauss, Biedermann, and their students, Caird and his readers) to think that the real Son of God is Humanity, that the Son is but immanent in man and not creative, that the value of Christ lies in the completeness with which His character expressed this sonship, which He neither exhausts nor confers; that He is therefore not different in principle from any son of man, and that all alike are Christs in varying degrees. There is some point of attachment for such a view in Luther and all who dwell on a Humanity eternal in God, and in Christ only exposed. But it goes to pieces on the pointed question whether Humanity then ceases to be a creature and is createe. The idea of an immanent Humanity is bound to end in the worship of Humanity, and the self-adoration of the Superman. While to view Christ as a creature is with the other hand, to stultify Humanity in its greatest product, the Church, which was made by the faith that its creation by Christ was the work of no creature hand.

Space does not allow of quotations which I had marked. I should much like to have adduced the brief but pregnant note on p. 352—so valuable on the fundamental matter of method. Here, as elsewhere, Dr. Mackintosh is full of reliant praise for Herrmann. "On the whole subject," he says, "see Herrmann's priceless book, 'Communism with God.'" This leads me to say two things. First, to subscribe warmly to all his praise for Herrmann's golden book, which (like McLeod Campbell's) reveals us to the classic days when great works on theology were also deep books of devotion. And, second, I could wish that Dr. Mackintosh had gone into a tulle examination of Herrmann's position, particularly discussing how far it rises above the loftiest kind of impressionism, how far it rises to regeneration, and how far our capitulation to the inner life of Jesus does justice to the finality and objectivity of the decisive act of the cross, and its creation of the New Humanity as the last moral ground of our belief in His Godhead. He does not allude to Frank at all, so far as I remember of the index shows.

V.

This is a wonderfully full, fine, and judicious work. I published myself a book on the same subject a few years ago; but I should never have had the courage to do so if this comprehensive book had come first. But someone must come after us both who shall be in a position to go farther in the constructive line, and carry us into interiors which the present stage of thought and faith barely opens and certainly does not yet irradiate. But we have got our

Literature.

MAITLAND OF LETHINGTON.*

An exhaustless fascination attaches to the period of Scottish history marked by the Reformation struggle, the question of English or French alliance, above all by the personality and fortunes of Mary Stuart, and the maelstrom of political intrigue and crime that centres in her unhappy figure. The history has been written from every point of view—with sympathy, with violent partisanship, in general narratives of the time, in biographies of the leading actors; and enchains the interest equally of the student of religion, of the statesman, of those drawn by the pathos and romance of an intensely complicated and difficult situation. One side from which the subject has not been so commonly approached is that of the character and career of Maitland of Lethington, by universal consent one of the subtlest and most influential of the statesmen and advisers of that troubled time, whose diplomacy is seen with increasing light to have been a potent factor in all its transactions. Skelton's brilliant book on "Maitland of Lethington, and the Scotland of Mary Stuart," now thirty-four years old, can hardly be surpassed in skill and picturesqueness of description; but, unfortunately, apart from the fact that much new material has been published since his time, its impartiality and accuracy are by no means in proportion to its cleverness of presentation. The warmth of Skelton's advocacy of Mary dimmed his appreciation of the profounder issues at stake in the religious and political condition of the country, led him vastly to belittle Knox and the Reformation, to ridicule the religious movement—see, e.g., his scolding comments on the Scots' Confession (I, p. 263)—and, one must say, to give a biased and distorted picture of most of the leading personages and episodes of the age. Many of his confident decisions have been, in the eyes of the most competent judges, decisively reversed.

It is therefore with the greatest satisfaction that we welcome the appearance of this new work on "Maitland of Lethington, the Minister of Mary Stuart: a Study of his Life and Times," by Mr. E. Russell, a work which, in scholarship, thoroughness, orderliness, and well-balanced presentation of its facts, and a sound instinct of historical judgment, will, we are convinced, take rank as one of the very finest books on Maitland, and on the whole period. Mr. Russell is not known as a writer of books, though every page shows him to be a master in historical research. His knowledge of everything throwing light on the age of Knox and Mary seems almost complete. State-papers have been digested to their minutest details; English, French, and Spanish documents and books lie open to him; and the picture he is able to present of the progress and relations of events, where everything at first sight is apt to appear an inextricable tangle, is marked by a rare clearness and persuasiveness. What strikes one chiefly in his presentation of the history alike of Lethington and of the period, is its absolute objectivity. Mr. Russell eschews rhetoric—has rather, one would fancy, a slight contempt for it—and declines to load his pages with picturesque descriptions of episodes, even the most stirring, which have been so often depicted by other pens. But he never loses hold of the main thread of his narrative, nor fails to make clear to the reader his own judgment on the course of events or of the persons involved in them. This is done, however, rather through the presentation itself, than through formal verdicts on their character and doings.

It is not an unjust claim, therefore, for Mr. Russell's book to say that it is as free as a book of the kind can well be from the vice of partisanship. His estimate of Lethington himself is well-nigh as high as Mr. Skelton's, though it does not blind him to the faults of Lethington's character in its lack of earnestness of moral conviction. The interest of the book naturally culminates when, from the earlier period of Lethington's activity, we come to the critical events of the reign of Mary; but a great service is rendered in clearing Lethington from many of the reproaches with which, through his action to Mary of Guise (for whom, as for others, Mr. Russell has a generous word), and the steadfastness of his advocacy of the English alliance, his memory has been loaded. "For three centuries," Mr.

Russell owns, "his name has been one of reproach mainly. The shadow of his last years has darkened all the rest of his career. He has come down to our own time chiefly in the light of Buchanan's Champeon and of Richard Bannatyne's Mickle Wily (Machiavelli). He has suffered a great historical controversy. And it is only through living memory that, with the aid of the ample and more authoritative evidence which the last century has gradually disclosed, his character and career have received a truer and more just appreciation." Maitland's "opportunism" is (p. 204) not, disguised, and it is seen, as the story goes on, how his over-subtlety, with a certain unscrupulousness in the means adopted to attain very worthy ends, wrought at length to his undoing. Moray is another character whom Mr. Russell takes pains to vindicate from many unjust aspersions—"the most just and magnanimous ruler," he calls him, "that Scotland has had since the days of Bruce" (p. 396). But it is in the tracing of the hidden threads of the tragic developments of Mary's reign that, as said, the interest of the book—we may add, its value—are at their height. Here, in the chapters on "The Spanish Match—Mary's Secret Diplomacy," "The Darnley Marriage: Mary her own Minister," "The Double Tragedy: Riccio and Darnley," "The Fall of the Queen—Maitland and Bothwell," "York and Westminster: Maitland and Moray," we are brought into contact with those elemental passions in human nature, in the resistless collision and play of which the essence of tragedy lies. "There is no forcing of the interest: the narrative moves on in its remorseless, almost dispassionate way, but with profound impression on the reader through the bare impact of the facts as brought to light. Mr. Russell does not even wait to discuss in detail the genuineness of the Gasket Letters: that is for him a question already settled once for all for historical science. He refers to Mr. T. F. Henderson's book and articles on the subject, and says: "The fact that Mr. Lang has now admitted the entire authenticity of Letter II. may fairly be regarded as closing the long controversy" (pp. 288, 325). With Mr. Henderson, he sees in the recovery of Morton's "Declaration," made to Cecil at the Westminster Conference, an irrefragable evidence of the genuineness of the documents.

It is unnecessary, however, to go into further details about the matter of all its volume. Its favourable reception by all genuine historical students of the period which it covers may be taken for granted. It is hoped that, by drawing attention to it now, a wider circle of readers may be attracted to its pages. It should only be added that in typography, illustration, and outward appearance the book is all that anyone could wish. The book has an excellent index.

DR. ABBOTT ON THE ODES OF SOLOMON.*

The ancient poet from whom, in the ninth part of his "Diatessarica," Dr. Abbott seeks light on the Gospel is the unknown author of the "Odes of Solomon." As the light of the Odes themselves, after all that has been done for their elucidation, hardly amounts to darkness visible, the title is not deficient in daring. When excellent scholars are so that this collection of poems is the missing link between Judaism and St. John's Gospel, and also that it is dependent on John; and that the author was a Christian, and also that he was a non-Christian Jew whose work has undergone Christian interpolation; that of sacraments the Odes do not seem to know much, and wholly to be sung as baptismal hymns—not to mention other contradictions—will probably conclude that the situation is one which demands rather than supplies light. Dr. Abbott, who thinks the time for a good translation has hardly come, only gives a version of twelve out of the forty-two odes, and he does not give the Syriac text. The version occupies less than nine pages of print, but the commentary on these few pages is so constructed as to illustrate everything in the collection which can be brought into relation to them. It treats systematically of all the author's favourite ideas, metaphors, sources and affinities just as occasion presents them, and if it is impossible to read steadily through anything so miscellaneous, the excellent and elaborate indices make it easy to find what is there. Dr. Abbott thinks the odes de-

serve "the same close, patient and minute study that we should give to the works of Clement of Rome, Ignatius, or Barnabas." It is possible to think that these respectable and venerable persons have been studied as minutely as they deserve, and though it is impossible to read a page of Dr. Abbott without learning something, the student who shares Macaulay's weakness for reading what he can understand may fairly appeal to Syriac scholars to come to some understanding of their author's meaning before they write any more big books about him. The world will not believe he was a great poet just because his editors say so. Perhaps Dr. Abbott does not rate him so highly as his discoverer. Dr. Rendel Harris speaks of "the originality of the writer, with whom it was easier to say inspired things than to report them," and tells us that "we have in our Odes the language of Christian experience upon the highest levels of the Spiritual Life." If this were so, it could not be had, even in Syriac odes. It would shine as it shines in the New Testament, or the "Pilgrim's Progress," or the "De Imitatione." In the translations it does not shine at all. To a great extent they are unintelligible, grotesque, even incoherent, and these defects are not redeemed when they are christened "mystical" or "sacramental."

JAMES DENNEY.

HELLENISM AND CHRISTIANITY.*

There is something isolated, rather than independent, in this book, and one can hardly give an idea of its purpose or its conclusions, except in the author's words. He is concerned, apparently, as an orthodox Jew, who believes both in the past and the future of his own religion, to deny the legitimacy of historical Christianity: he cannot allow its right to appeal either to the Old Testament or to true Judaism. His views may be summed up in his own language as follows: "The adoption of the best teaching of Judaism made Christianity an ethical religion. The absorption of Greek philosophy adapted it to the educated Greek, whilst the inclusion of beliefs and rites borrowed from the mystery religions of Hellenism made Christianity acceptable to the lower classes of the heathens." It is interesting to see what can be made of this thesis by a Rabbinic mind schooled, or, at least, read in modern critical literature, but it is rather interesting than instructive. "Jesus was hellenised, and, in consequence, He was deified." "We have shown that Easter and Christmas, Baptism and Holy Communion, were all known to the Hellenistic cults before the birth of Christianity." There is not much light in utterances like these, and, indeed, the externality of Mr. Friedlander's attitude to Christianity is almost incomprehensible. It is difficult to know how with such an attitude he should be so interested as to study it at all, and certainly, whatever its worth or worthlessness, the key to the New Testament is not to be sought with him either in Comparative Religion or Eastern Archaeology. J. D.

ECCE DEUS.†

This is the English edition of a work which has already appeared in German, one of the weirdest products of the theory which attempts to explain Christianity apart from Christ. The thesis of the book is that the Christian religion was simply a monotheistic movement, with a strong moral tinge, which vivified a number of mythological elements in a contemporary syncretism. A writer who, incidentally, has to prove that Mark's Gospel has not a single human lineament, requires weighty allies, and Mr. Smith has four. He is egotistical, past all believing. He possesses the gift of rhetoric. "It is as the final efflorescence of the Judæo-Græco-Roman spirit, that Christianity is a wholly and infinitely significant." This is a precious piece of insight. It is rivalled by the assertion that the New Testament writers were wise enough to study Plato's Republic and comparative religion, and that their researches met a real need of the age. They were a wonderful set, these "students of religion," though you must not look for genuine Christianity in the New Testament; that is found in the apologists of the second century. Finally, Mr. Smith's

* *Hellenism and Christianity*, by Gerald Friedlander, Professor of the Western Synagogue, London. (London: P. Valentin and Son's Successors.)
† *Ecce Deus*. Studies of Primitive Christianity. By William Benjamin Smith. Price 6s. net. (London: Watts and Co.)

historical sense is equal to any problems which are left over. There are one or two, but obviously minor, and easily settled. Thus we read, "Even if we had no evidence whatever of a pre-Christian Jesus-cult, we should be compelled to affirm its existence with undiminished decision." Of course we should! What is evidence, to hinder so obvious an affirmation? And having done so, we should be ready to see that Hippolytus' account of the Doctete, "or at least its idea, with its form of expression, is older than Coloss. ii. 14-15"; also (this is in italics) that "there are no texts in the Gospels that indicate that the Jesus was a man." Finally, we behold even Schmiedel's nine pillar-passages being disintegrated; for Mr. Smith has no patience with the liberal theologians who reconstruct Christianity out of the faith of Jesus. There are about 350 large pages devoted to this sort of thing, and this is "Ecce Deus." Not that it is Mr. Smith's last word. Far from that. "The writer seems to have proved clearly in a work (yet in MS.) on 'Gnostic Elements in the New Testament' that the New Testament parallels to preserved Gnostic passages are almost without exception younger than Gnostic correspondents." This is a choice sentence; the "seems" is so good that we are sorry to come upon "almost." Then, "The writer completed in September, 1909, a minute discussion of Mark, verse by verse; since then the importunity of professional duties has prevented final revision and preparation for the press." "Let no one suppose," we are also warned in the preface, "that the author's quiver is herewith emptied." No reader of "Ecce Deus" would suppose such a thing. The kind of arguments and assertions that occupy these pages could be spun out and elaborated without end; they float on, serenely indifferent to the facts and methods of history, and there is no moral reason, beyond the tax upon the writer's fancy, why they should not multiply. We do not intend to regard "Ecce Deus" as typical of American theology. America does not deserve that at our hands. But never again, even when the United States are dubbed material and matter-of-fact, never again will we doubt the capacity of the American as an amateur theologian, to soar airily above the trammels of fact and logic and reality in which, according to "Ecce Deus," the majority of the effete German and British theologians are evidently content to live and move, and have their miserable being. JAMES MCFATT.

THE HEAVENLY SESSION.*

Dr. Tait describes his book, in the sub-title, as "an introduction to the history of the doctrine," but when the evidence from the New Testament is analysed it amounts to little more than a few references, couched in Oriental metaphor, to Christ seated at the right hand of God's throne. To make a doctrine out of this imaginative element in the primitive theology of the early Christians is hazardous. The formulated doctrine only appeared under the stress of the Arian controversy. Prior to that, any attention paid to it came from the Western Church, and in the apostolic fathers it is barely noticed. As a topic of scientific Christology, it has an interest of its own; but it is hardly a doctrine; it is an instance of metaphor being hardened into a theological affirmation. The religious interest which underlies the New Testament phrases is the insistence upon Christ's authority and completed sacrifice. Dr. Tait, in his careful and comprehensive volume, calls attention to the theological errors perpetuated by the vulgar translation of Heb. viii. 3, which "was in no small measure responsible for the development of the medieval conception of a continual propitiatory offering, whether by Christ Himself in the heavenly sanctuary or by Christ through His priests at the altars on earth." He also keeps in view the bearing of the doctrine, even in its technical statements, upon the Christian experience.

QUEER LITTLE JANE.†

Curtis Yorke has mixed the ingredients of her book with a light and practised hand, and the result is a gossamer and airy love story about an ingenuous maid who follows a lad who has been kind to her all the way to Canada, and there naturally meets the real man who is to bring her happiness. This sort of thing reads easily, but it is not easy to do. Congratulations to the writer.

* *The Heavenly Session of our Lord*, by Rev. J. Tait, D.D. Price 6s. (London: Robert Scott, 1912.)
† *Queer Little Jane*, by Curtis Yorke (John Loog).

* *Light on the Gospel from an Ancient Text*, by Edwin A. Abbott. (Cambridge: At the University Press.)

* *Maitland of Lethington, the Minister of Mary Stuart. A Study of his Life and Times*. By E. Russell. 12s. net. (London: James Nisbet and Co., Ltd.)