

[The Presbyterian, Nov. 24, 1927] [This review by David S. Clark appeared on the same as a review by his son, Gordon H. Clark]

WHEN THE BIBLE IS MINIMIZED

Before, Behind (and Bigger Than) the Bible. By Samuel Hamill Wood. Stratford Company; \$1.50.

One cannot object that God is magnified, but we do regret when the Bible is minimized. God truly is older than the Bible, but the Bible is God's Word, and loyalty to God must involve regard for his Word.

The author has a very inadequate conception of the Bible. To him it is just human literature, and that not of a very high order. The usual parrot-like repetition of the Wellhausen fallacy is given without an attempt at proof. Well, it is incapable of proof, and so he is wise not to attempt it. Yet we had hoped that the falsity of the theory had at least punctured the cuticle of the ordinary scholar.

To the author the miracles are largely legend, myth folklore. He puts a very disparaging estimate on Abraham, Lot, Jacob, Samuel and David; but sound the praises of Ishmael, Esau and Pharaoh. He holds up all the faults of the patriarchs in glaring conspicuity. He rings the changes on the barbarities of a crude age. It leaves the impression on an ordinary reader that all this recital thoroughly discredits the Bible as the Word of God. The Bible is true to the facts even as to the faults of its heroes and one of its chief functions is warning against sin. "These things were written for admonition."

He thinks that the Bible might be amended to much profit, and that we are not bound to put on it any literal interpretation. Absolute literalism is not the position of the conservative; but even that would be better than an allegorizing method, or the latitude of the rationalist.

An example of the author's interpretation follows: "And man became a living soul." But "became" means development, and development is equivalent to evolution.

The proceeds of the sale of this book are to be devoted to the endowment fund of the Episcopal Church of St. Matthias, Philadelphia. We hope the church will get the endowment; but we are not greatly anxious for the wide circulation of this book.

D.S.C.