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CHURCH BOOK ROOM NOTES.

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ARRANGEMENTS are being made for the immediate issue of a new and revised edition of *The Catholic Faith* by Dr. Griffith Thomas. The new edition will be published at a price little in excess of the old (1s. 6d. net), so as to enable it still to be used largely by students and teachers who cannot afford expensive books, and also to allow for its continued distribution to Confirmation Candidates, Sunday School teachers, etc. The book is particularly useful for this last purpose, as it is a comprehensive and at the same time a simple work on Church doctrine. It is designed to answer the questions, What is the Church of England? and What does the Church of England teach? Part 1, "The Catholic Faith and the Individual Life," deals with the relations of the individual Christian to God, and how that relation is formed and maintained. Part 2, "The Catholic Faith and Church Life," deals with the relation of the individual Churchman to his fellow Churchmen in regard to doctrine, worship, and practice. Part 3, "The Catholic Faith and Current Questions," deals with the relation of the individual Churchman to some important questions of the day, and to this section is added an extremely useful and instructive chapter on what is known as the Principal Service. These sectional headings only imperfectly suggest the wide range of subjects dealt with, and from our knowledge Churchmen will find in the Manual just the guidance and assistance they require. We live at a time when spiritual men of all Churches should not only make their position intelligent to themselves, but be ready to define and defend it in view of all opposition. This book has served in the past, and will, it is hoped, continue to help many in such endeavour.

Sir Edward Clarke supplied a real need when he wrote *What Vestments are Legal in the Church of England?* It was very desirable to have the entire historical and legal position reviewed by one who is fully acquainted with its ramifications, and has the gift of putting facts in their right perspective, and of making them clear to the "man in the street" without sacrificing accuracy or employing invective. Two large editions of the pamphlet have been sold and circulated since its first issue in 1912, and it has been found necessary to issue a third edition which is now obtainable from the Church Book Room at 2d. or 14s. per 100 net. It is unfortunate that owing to the largely increased cost of production it was found impossible to issue the pamphlet at a cheaper rate, but its intrinsic value, and the constant demand for it, are such that it was imperative to publish now and not to wait in the hope of a fall in production charges. Sir Edward Clarke has carefully revised the new edition, which will be found most readable, and free from technicalities that obscure the strength of the case in the minds of people who are confused by words that convey no meaning to them, but who appreciate the force of language they understand.

This is a little book by the Rev. G. R. Balleine, M.A., author of *The History of a Layman's of the Evangelical Party*. *A Layman's History of the Church of England* (6d. net) consists of 200 pages telling the story of the Church of England from its beginning in the second century to to-day. It is as fascinatingly written as any romance. It is suggestive, and few will read it without sermons springing from its pages,

for it shows in a most remarkable way how Christianity can transform a people. To make it very concrete, the author takes one single church, an imaginary one in an imaginary village, and traces its history and fortunes and vicissitudes down to the present day. But this history of this one Church is the history of Christianity in England. As the author says: "Some church histories have been written from the standpoint of an archbishop's commissary. They deal with kings and councils and conferences, and the business of bishops and archdeacons. They move in an atmosphere immensely remote from anything that the average Churchman ever comes in touch with. But the present book deals with the Church as it is seen by the man in the pew, not by the man in the mitre. It keeps a typical English parish in the centre of the stage. It tries to trace the religion and worship of an ordinary village congregation through the different centuries. It aims at showing how the things with which every Churchman is familiar gradually grew to be what they are to-day. It does not ignore what bishops and kings were doing at headquarters, but it studies these matters, not through the debates of the council chamber, but through the results which followed in the actual life of the parishes."

Many clergymen and active workers amongst children have long felt that there is a weakness in the otherwise excellent work of Sunday Schools, boys' and girls' clubs, etc., that it does not in any way prepare the children to take their part in the public worship of their church when they are too old for what they have been accustomed to as children. It is felt that some effort should be made to supplement Sunday School work so as to enable the young to take a full and interested part in the life and worship of the Church. An attempt has been made to compile a form of service for use at Children's Services, at Sunday Schools, Mission Services, etc., by Mr. Lawrence C. Head, who has for many years done a great work among children in South London. The great advantage of the book is that it follows Prayer Book lines closely, so that it really does prepare the children to worship as adults, and the service runs on without awkward breaks and the necessity for finding fresh places. The Psalms are printed from the Cathedral Psalter and are twelve in number, and there are several hymns, the Church Seasons being the basis of choice. The printing is excellent, and the price is moderate (2d. net or 14s. per 100).

That there is a strong movement in our Church at the present time to re-establish the practice of systematic confession to a Priest in order to obtain private absolution is evidenced by the references to Confession contained in the recent Memorial to the Archbishops signed by 600 Priests in the Church of England. It is necessary for all Churchpeople to make themselves acquainted with the teaching of the Church of England in regard to this important matter, and a trustworthy guide on the facts of the subject is to be found in *The Confessional* by Canon F. Meyrick (3d. net). This pamphlet is a severe condemnation of the practice on the grounds alike of Scripture, of primitive custom, of history and of its practical consequences. Those who read it with unprejudiced minds will probably be convinced that few greater injuries can be done to the English Church and the English people than the re-introduction for general adoption of a practice so inconsistent with ancient example and so adverse to the cultivation of the best manly and womanly character.