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BOOKS AND THEIR WRITERS.

THE "Living Church Series" continues to maintain its variety and interest. It already covers many aspects of Church life and history. One of the latest additions provides an interesting and novel method of presenting the development of religious thought and work throughout the centuries. The book is called *Representative Churchmen of Twenty Centuries*, and its author is the Rev. Hugh Watt, D.D., Professor of Church History, New College, Edinburgh (Messrs. James Clarke & Co., 6s. net). He "has set himself to envisage and depict the particular problems which have confronted the Christian Church in each of the twenty centuries." He has chosen one man as the representative of each century, and "his series consists of the men whom he regards as having combined at each period the truest vision of the immediate task and the soundest contribution to its fulfilment." The choice in some centuries is fairly obvious, but in others it is difficult to decide which is the most representative Churchman, yet, on the whole, Dr. Watt has shown remarkable judgment in his selection and ability in his method of presenting the chief features of each age. A brief summary of each century prefixed to the account of its representative gives an opportunity of providing the necessary setting and the connecting links. St. Paul and Justin Martyr for the first and second centuries are followed by Cyprian for the third. The brief account of his work leaves just the necessary impression of his abilities and of that departure from the New Testament teaching which led on to so many of the errors of the medieval Church. Constantine in the fourth century is shown as the determining influence in the development of the Church in that critical period. No question can be raised as to the claim of Augustine to represent his age. "He stood on the border line of two worlds." The Church suffered from the great mass of the half-converted. "They brought their old heathen ideas with them, and found for them a new expression within the Christian Church. Its worship became paganized." The missionary zeal of the Celtic Church is represented by Columbanus and Boniface in the sixth and eighth centuries. Charlemagne, Odo of Cluny, Hildebrand and Bernard of Clairvaux form a succession and indicate the lines of movement in their days. Francis of Assisi stands out as quite a different type from any of the others, while Wyclif and John Gerson, whose name is the least familiar in the list, indicate the coming reforms, which reach their height in Luther as the man of the sixteenth century. Once again an unexpected choice is that of the Scotch leader Alexander Hamilton as representative of the seventeenth century. His leadership of the Presbyterians of Scotland against the attempts to force episcopacy on the Scotch Church justifies his place. No other name than that of John Wesley could be chosen for the eighteenth century, and David Livingstone well serves to indicate the missionary enthusiasm of the nineteenth.

In spite of the obvious limitations of the scheme, the impression thus given of the successive ages of the Church is of special value. The picture is not blurred by the mass of detail which in other histories often serves to render the general effect indistinct. A student with the background provided in this volume will be well equipped in every way to benefit by the study of the larger and more detailed histories. Dr. Watt has provided a book that might well be used as a text-book for study circles on Church history. It will serve well as an introduction to that study for students generally.

Another interesting volume in the "Living Church Series" is *The Church and Science, A Study of the Inter-relation of Theological and Scientific Thought*, by Hector Macpherson, M.A., Ph.D. (6s. net). Many books have been written on the past warfare between Religion and Science, but there is ample room for a popular historical account of the great principles involved on either side in the unhappy relations of religious and scientific thinkers. Dr. Macpherson commences with an account of scientific speculation in the ancient world and the Hebrew conception of the universe, "the cosmography of appearances." A chapter on the pre-Reformation Church and Science leads up to the more interesting discussion of the Church and the New Cosmology. The first great clash took place over the Copernican System. He is somewhat severe on Galileo for his weakness before the Inquisition, but we must feel sympathy with the old man when face to face with what Dr. Macpherson describes as the amazing bigotry and brutal violence of the official representatives of Jesus Christ. At the same time we cannot ignore, in view of the attitude of many modern Christians, the fear of theologians like Bellarmine that the displacement of the earth from its central place in the universe would be fatal to the Christian religion. The fact that these theologians were mistaken ought to be a sufficient warning that the advance of scientific knowledge, however much it may appear at the outset to conflict with the teaching of Divine revelation, must in the end be found to be in harmony with it, as there is but one source of truth whether the truth comes to man by discovery or revelation. Kepler ought to be our leader in this respect. "All discovery he viewed as revelation; in a phrase which has become classic, he regarded discovery as 'thinking the thoughts of God after him.'" The influence of the new Cosmology on theological thought is traced through its various stages, and due credit is given to the thinkers of the Church who estimated the new knowledge at its true worth, and helped Christians to adapt their outlook to the new conditions. Modern developments are treated at considerable length, and the work of Christian thinkers on similar lines is presented with great clearness. The writer's conclusions in the last chapter on Science and Religion to-day will not all be accepted, but we shall all agree with his appeal for an open mind on many of the great problems which remain to be solved by future generations. "For science and religion are alike activities of the

human spirit which lead mankind nearer to God, and are alike due to the promptings of the Spirit of Truth which guides into all truth."

Sir Thomas More, who was a skilful diplomatist, as well as Speaker of the House of Commons and Lord Chancellor of England under Henry VIII, is not the man whom most of us would describe as "the first modern socialist," yet this is the description given of him by a German author, Karl Kautsky, whose *Thomas More and His Utopia, with a Historical Introduction*, has been translated by H. J. Stenning and published by A. & C. Black, Ltd. (6s.). He finds the principles of modern socialism seriously set forth in More's fancy picture of an ideal state, although like Bacon's *New Atlantis*, Harrington's *Oceana* and other similar works, it was more in the nature of a *jeu d'esprit*. It was a play of fancy with a touch of satire on the actual conditions of government in the land most familiar to him. Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* represents the same spirit with the satirical element more strongly developed. In addition to the analysis of *Utopia* a summary is given of the tendencies of European history for several ages prior to the reign of Henry VIII. It is written from the same socialistic point of view, and it is interesting as an example of how a mind obsessed with one idea can colour the whole succession of events and attribute them to materialistic sources. The struggle with the Papacy is more particularly represented in this light. The medieval Church was in his view merely a political organization. The Popes sought means to secure their control over Christendom by the acquirement of property. The revolt against Rome was solely an effort to resist this material aggrandisement of the Papacy. Few of us will be prepared to accept this as an adequate or full interpretation of the great spiritual movement which created the modern world.

A number of writings of the earliest days of the Church are interesting from many points of view, but chiefly because they illustrate the thought and in some measure the life of the sub-Apostolic age. A new edition of some of them has recently been issued under the title *Excluded Books of the New Testament* (Eveleigh Nash & Grayson, 7s. 6d. net). The volume is well printed and tastefully produced, and has an introduction by Dr. Armitage Robinson, Dean of Wells. It contains The Book of James, The Gospel of Nicodemus (Parts I and II), The Gospel of Peter, The Revelation of Peter, The Genuine Epistle of St. Clement, The So-called Second Epistle of St. Clement, The Epistle of Barnabas, and The Shepherd of Hermas. The translations are by Bishop Lightfoot, Dr. M. R. James, Professor H. B. Swete and others. Some of these documents of this early period are well known, and the others deserve more attention than they have perhaps received. Dr. Armitage Robinson's introduction supplies some interesting information about them. He dislikes the title "Excluded Books," and shows that the character of the books was an adequate reason

for their finding no place in the canon of the New Testament. The Provost of Eton has treated the whole subject of this Apocryphal literature in his recent book, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, and to it readers are referred by the Dean for a full account of these writings as well as to his own book, which deals with two of the documents, "Barnabas, Hermas and the Didache." The ordinary reader will, however, find all he wants both in the way of a good translation and an explanation of the origin and significance of the writings in this edition.

The latest volume of *The Speaker's Bible* (Speaker's Bible Office, Aberdeen, 9s. 6d. net) is on the First Epistle of the Corinthians, and covers the first eleven chapters. I have already on several occasions described the contents of these volumes, which are so valuable a help to all preachers and teachers of Scripture. The present volume maintains the same high standard of excellence as its predecessors. The First Epistle to the Corinthians provides preachers with a wide range of subjects, and especially with those of the practical character which most congregations prefer, while doctrinal topics of importance are also abundant for special occasions. On all of them there are suggestive ideas, and there is the same wealth of illustration drawn from all kinds of sources, and more particularly from modern thinkers who are in touch with the special outlook of to-day. This source of adequate equipment for the preacher leaves no excuse for dull sermons, and even good sermons may be made better by the judicious use of the valuable selection of the thoughts of great minds provided in the comprehensive studies of each text. In the present volume Professor W. Fulton, D.D., of Aberdeen University, contributes the introduction, brief but adequate. Special articles are contributed by Dr. J. H. Morrison, on "The Foolishness of Preaching," "Knowledge and Love" and "Christian Expediency." Dr. W. M. Grant writes on "Personality in Service." Sermons on many of the chief aspects of Christ and His work are very prominent. Such age-long subjects as the conflicting claims of culture and the Cross, the limits of liberty and the value of the Holy Communion are among the contents of the chapters treated. A full index of sermons and of references to other books completes the usefulness of this valuable addition to the preacher's library.

There are some books which, although they were written a number of years ago and in some cases were intended to meet special conditions, are yet of great value as containing material of great usefulness. Some of them contain facts which cannot be readily obtained without considerable research in larger and not easily accessible volumes. At the present time some of these facts are of special importance in view of recent developments in our Church politics, and of the relationship of our Church to other Communion and especially to the Church of Rome. One of these is the Rev. H. W. Dearden's *Modern Romanism Examined*. It is

a full and clear statement of the errors of the Church of Rome, written with scholarly appreciation of the points at issue between the teaching of that Church and our own. The book was originally issued with strong recommendations from Dr. R. Sinker, the learned Librarian of Trinity College, Cambridge, and from Bishop Moule, both of whom wrote introductory notes to earlier editions. A fourth edition has just been issued by Messrs. Chas. Thynne & Jarvis, Ltd., at the very moderate cost of half-a-crown. Some additional notes have been added to this edition, which give recent facts showing the present position of the Roman Church and the increasing claims being made for it in different parts of the world. In view of the aggressiveness of Romish propaganda this book will be found of exceptional use, as it gives quotations from authoritative documents and a full explanation of their significance. It is a useful handbook on the Roman Controversy, and I may remind my readers that the controversy, so far from being an affair of the past, as some members of our Church would have us believe, is likely to become more acute as the essential intolerance of Rome's claims is realized through personal contact with them. An Anglo-Catholic rector, in whose parish a Roman Catholic squire and his daughter are revolutionizing the whole character of the village by turning out the Protestants and replacing them with Romanists, at the head of whom is a priest of the most aggressive type, said not long ago: "I used to have a favourable opinion of the Roman Church, but I have revised my views since I have experience of them and their methods in my parish." The best weapon with which to combat Romanism in all its forms is an accurate knowledge of its teaching and its results, and this is supplied with studied moderation and a complete absence of exaggeration in this useful and comprehensive volume by Mr. Dearden.

Another similar volume is Bishop J. C. Ryle's well known *Knots Untied*, of which Messrs. Chas. Thynne & Jarvis have issued a twenty-ninth edition under the editorship of the Rev. C. Sydney Carter and with a Foreword by Bishop Chavasse, Dr. Ryle's successor in the bishopric of Liverpool. It is unnecessary to describe this work. Most Evangelical Churchmen know that it well answers the description on its title page, "Plain Statements on Disputed Points in Religion from an Evangelical Standpoint." Mr. Carter in his preface to this edition points out "how extraordinarily appropriate it is in view of the controversy which is so acute now over the Revision of the Prayer Book." The only changes made by the editor are in certain expressions and allusions which with the lapse of time are out of date, and in a certain prolixity and repetition unacceptable to the ordinary reader in an age "which seems able to afford less and less time for any serious or solid reading." This may be just one of the reasons which make this book so necessary to-day. As Bishop Chavasse well says, "It will help to answer the difficulties of many Church people at the present time." The Bishop also records two incidents which show that Dr. Ryle "was

not a mere controversial writer, but a keen winner of souls and a true follower of Christ in the path of self-sacrifice." He adds: "The words of such a man acquire new force as we read them. He lived near to God, and God spoke through him." It is a good sign that there is such a demand for these books as to warrant the issue of new editions. If they are carefully studied they will help to defend our Church and country from the encroachments of Medievalism.

C.M.S. has issued its "Story of the Year, 1926-7," under the title *Building the Church* (1s. net). The writer of this unusually interesting account of the work of our great Evangelical Missionary Society during the past year is Miss Phyllis L. Garrick, and the Society is to be congratulated on securing the help of one who has so thoroughly mastered the art of selection and artistic presentation of a wealth of almost bewildering detail. The feature of the present stage of Missionary work in many places is the setting up of the Christian Church in accordance with the needs of each land. "There is no greater problem confronting the Church of Christ to-day than that of the indigenous Churches and the issues involved in growth." "What are to be their standards of doctrine, the varieties of their organisations, the limits of their freedom to build according to the leading of their own genius and aspirations, quickened and sanctified by the Spirit of God?" These are some of the questions which Miss Garrick sets herself to answer. She arranges her story in a framework suggested by Ruskin's "Seven Lamps of Architecture"—the lamps of Sacrifice, Truth, Power, Beauty, Life, Memory and Obedience. The materials supplied by the workers of the Society are brought together under these aspects. The appeal of the workers from every field of operation is searching and the note of urgency is sounded on every side. Examples are too numerous to quote. They are given from the Mass Movements in India, from the educational work in Africa, faced with the temptations to the people which come from the rapid increase of material prosperity; from China with its unrest and awakening spirit of Nationalism, its cry of "China for the Chinese." Devolution is needed but it presents dangers, and the native Churches are not yet in a position to become self-supporting. European guidance and help are still needed, and are perhaps more important now than ever. This story shows that there is now an opportunity which will, if used, bear abundant fruit, but if neglected may lead to future disasters to the purity of the Christian Faith.

G. F. I.