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BOOKS AND THEIR WRITERS.

THE Lenten season usually brings a number of books specially written to aid the development of spiritual life, and the formation of the highest type of Christian character. The common characteristic of these books is a strong emphasis on the necessity of reality in our religion, and a practical application of Christian teaching in the common duties of everyday life. For some years past the Bishop of London has arranged for the issue of a special book of devotional help and instruction for the people of his diocese. Many of these books have been singularly instructive and have deservedly had a wide circulation throughout the Church. This year the task of writing the book has been entrusted to Canon C. S. Woodward, of Westminster, who has taken as his subject, *Christ in the Common Ways of Life* (Longmans, Green & Co., 2s. 6d. net). His aim is very definite. There are many books suitable for those advanced in spiritual experience, "but there are comparatively few books about religion written on the level of the ordinary man," and he aims at setting out the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, when properly understood, as meeting all this need. We must first define our relationship to Jesus Christ, and this involves an answer to the question, "What think ye of Christ?" The New Testament account of His life brings us to His Divinity,—to faith in Him and acceptance of His teaching as the rule of life. His teaching was marked by simplicity. It was so plain that a child could understand it. Religion was just the art of loving God and your fellow-men. The records of His teaching have little to say about ceremonial or liturgy. It is difficult to believe that ritual and ceremonial attracted Him. He relied upon personality, His own and that of His followers, for the building of the Kingdom. What a man thinks about God determines all his thoughts and actions, and in the teaching of Jesus, God comes absolutely first. Love is the primary duty of man towards his Maker. This love must find its expression in action—the offering of self. This must be done in the childlike spirit. The four characteristics of this spirit are: freedom from worry and anxiety, idealism or hopefulness, imperviousness to criticism, and freshness and spontaneity. Jesus bade His disciples to cultivate the childlike spirit. It springs from a genuine trust in God which is expressed in joyousness, hopefulness, a carelessness of the opinion of the world and a courageous facing of the future. "Is it not rather true that the spirit of middle age has captured the Church and expelled the childlike spirit?" The spirit of service is essential. It is more than philanthropy. Service consists not so much in what we do as the spirit in which we do it. It requires humility; but humility is not self-depreciation, it is the entire absence of self-seeking. In applying all this to daily life a Christian ought to be known not only by the fact that he goes to church on Sunday, but by the difference between him and non-Christians during the

week, for work is a debt we owe to God, to other men and to ourselves. Amusements have taken too large a place in the life of the young. Pleasure is no longer a side-show. Amusement and recreation should be regarded as synonymous. The austerity of the Puritan is to be admired, but Christ never taught that asceticism is to be the rule of life. Nothing is so self-revealing as our attitude towards money. We must be as scrupulous in the getting of it as in the spending of it. Some adequate return must be made for it, and we must never receive it at the cost of injury to others. In regard to citizenship, the Christian must be in the van of the fight against cruelty and selfishness. The Kingdom of God is not concerned only with the souls of men. For all this "the Enabling Spirit" is needed, for we have no power to help ourselves. The vision of the Kingdom is before us. Love and self-sacrifice are the materials out of which it must be built. Whole-hearted allegiance to Christ is the only source and motive power. Canon Woodward has shown the wide range of the power of Christ in the life of men, and has given much valuable practical advice on Christian conduct.

Another book for Lent reading is Canon Peter Green's *Our Lord and Saviour*: A Study of the Person and Doctrine of Jesus Christ (Longmans, Green & Co., 2s. 6d. paper, 4s. cloth). Here, again, the desire to make Christian experience an intense reality is the inspiring purpose of the writer, and his sincerity and earnestness leave a deep impression on the reader. He also begins with the question, "What is Christ to me?" and he goes back to the New Testament record, for many sincere Christians, or people who sincerely desire to be Christians, really know very little of their Lord and Saviour. We need a great revival of religion, nothing else can save the world from catastrophe, and only two things can lead to such a revival—more intense prayer and a fresh vision of our Lord and Saviour. This book is to help people to obtain that knowledge of Jesus Christ which they desire. Love and obedience are the qualifications for that knowledge. The threefold path to this knowledge is first by vision, then by understanding, and lastly by discipleship. Each of these is illustrated by telling narratives from the writer's own experience, and especially from his intercourse with young men of varying degrees of religious development. Canon Green is a Churchman of the Anglo-Catholic school, and the terms used by that school are often to be found in his pages, but they are not essential and do not interfere with the real Evangelical fervour and conviction revealed throughout. Even his references to the Real Presence show that the experience of Christ's presence by the faithful communicant need not be associated with any presence in the Elements. The personal knowledge of our Saviour, upon which he rightly insists, is not dependent on the Sacraments, though they are naturally a means of realizing Christ more fully. From the practical aspect of the reality of the experience of Christ he passes to consider some of the doctrines connected with Christ's person. He shows the grounds on which he accepts

the Virgin birth, and the reasons which can be urged for the vicarious nature of the Atonement. His chapter on the Atonement is one of the most useful in the book, and states several important truths with special clearness. The chapter on the Resurrection is again a summary of Christian teaching of special value. He claims for Ascension Day that it, rather than Whitsun Day, is the beginning of the new dispensation. We do not, of course, agree with his representation of the Holy Communion as the offering to God of the timeless and Eternal Sacrifice in Heaven, but apart from these few points of doctrine the book deserves to be read as a vivid and inspiring presentation of Christ as Saviour.

The Rev. T. A. Gurney, M.A., LL.B., has written a useful volume of "Studies in the Manifestations of the Risen Lord," which has been issued by the Religious Tract Society under the title *Alive for Evermore* (7s. 6d. net). The Resurrection of our Lord is a subject which will never cease to attract the attention of students. New points are constantly being raised. New views are constantly being put forward. Every detail of the New Testament narrative receives fresh consideration both from those who accept them as statements of historical fact, and from those who endeavour to explain them away. It is well, therefore, that there should be those who, with knowledge of the latest views put forward on both sides, are able to give general readers an adequate presentation of any fresh light which illuminates these fundamental facts essential as a basis of our Christian faith. Mr. Gurney's studies provide such a fresh examination of the facts. They give preachers and teachers and all interested in Bible study a fresh insight into the events connected with the Resurrection of our Lord. He examines the evidence for each point, shows the intimate connection between all the portions of the narrative, and draws out the conclusions which alone form the adequate result of the whole in view of all that has arisen from them. He is convinced that we are in a position to pronounce a final opinion upon all that really matters in connection with the Resurrection of our Lord, and that it answers the need of our day. "Let witness be borne clearly to the heart and mind of this wistful, after-war world of the truth and certainty of His resurrection, as confirmed by every fresh revelation of thought, by every new experience of life, by the deepest desires of souls, by the plainest readings of history, by the shadowings forth of an ever-widening science, and by the victory—in spite of our weakness—of His great cause among the nations." "Christ is risen" is the essential fact. That is the dominating fact in all life and labour, and it needs "to be restored, through the mind of the Church, to the mind of Humanity."

In following out the story of the Resurrection and the appearances of our Lord to His disciples, Mr. Gurney adds to the explanation of each event an appropriate title illustrating the main theme associated with it. In this way he provides preachers with sug-

gestive subjects. The Resurrection is a revelation of power and of love. Love is the pledge and prophecy of immortality. The Resurrection is a revelation of identity and transfiguration. In his treatment of the spiritual body of our Lord he follows the teaching of Origen and the Alexandrians, who held that the identity did not depend on physical conditions, and did not consist in any material continuity of particles, but "in the continuity or permanence of the spirit which gives the law to its constitution and moulds or fashions it to be the fitting vehicle of its manifestations under varying conditions." As a revelation of fulfilment, the Resurrection is the only adequate interpretation of Sin, Redemption and the Kingdom, and it interprets the Mission and Authority of the Church. He holds that, "with the Resurrection, the official, the external, the ecclesiastical, the political are replaced for all time by the inward and spiritual as the true features of the Kingdom." On the much misunderstood words, "Whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven them; whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained," and the mistaken ideas of priestly power based on them, he shows that the history of the early Church reveals how the authority was exercised. The Church made known to men the conditions of the great salvation. It had no powers belonging exclusively to a caste or specialized priesthood, and nothing to justify papal infallibility, priestly autocracy or political dominion. The manifestations to St. Thomas, to the disciples in Galilee, and the problems connected with them, are carefully examined and adequately explained. The effect of the manifestations is clearly set out, and the dependence of the growth of the Kingdom on the fact is maintained. Similar attention is given to the events of the day of the Ascension. The further manifestations of our Lord to St. Paul and to St. John at Patmos are treated in their appropriate setting. The whole series of studies form a fresh and useful treatment of a subject of supreme importance in the light of the latest knowledge and of the special conditions of thought of to-day.

Dr. Rufus M. Jones, Professor of Philosophy in Haverford College, is one of the most prominent of the small band of writers who have set themselves to interpret Mysticism to the present generation. His latest work on the subject is *New Studies in Mystical Religion* (Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 7s. 6d. net), and contains the Ely Lectures delivered at Union Theological Seminary, New York. The Dedication of the volume is interesting; it runs: "To the beautiful memory of my friend, Baron Friedrich von Hügel, the foremost interpreter of mystical religion in this generation, who strikingly illustrated the meaning of radiance in religion, and who made me see more clearly than anyone else what it means to be a member of the invisible Church." Von Hügel was himself the author of a book on the subject, *The Mystical Element in Religion*, but, in spite of his friendliness towards those of other religious communions, he could be guilty of ecclesiastical intolerance through his loyalty to Rome. As a writer on his Letters in *The Expository*

Times recently said: "Hügel was a man with a most winning personality and he had friends in all communions. But we are brought up short with a sense of dismay when we find that, sitting on the Committee in 1917 on the Army and Religion, although he could go a little further than Shylock and eat and drink with his fellow-members, he could not pray with them."

One of the chief tasks of writers on Mysticism at the present time is to defend it from misrepresentation. The principal attack in recent years has come from the psychologists, who regard mystic experiences as purely subjective without any objective reality. Dr. Jones devotes his Introduction to meeting this objection. As the psychologist finds no ground for objective validity in any experience of values, he can legitimately have nothing to say as to the ultimate metaphysical ground of the spiritual values of mystical experiences. He also pleads that mysticism should no longer be used as an alias for what is uncanny and obscurantist. "Mysticism is not a synonym for the 'mysterious.' It does not mean something 'occult' or 'esoteric,' or 'gnostic' or 'pseudo-psychic.' It only means that the soul of man has dealings with realities of a different order from that with which senses deal." The successive chapters are an explanation of this true character of mysticism, and a defence of its essential nature from some of the abnormalities frequently associated with it. There is a fellowship with an environment much larger than the visible and tangible one. Several instances are given of this experience, which show that our spirits "cannot be sounded with the plummet of the utilitarian nor meted out by the measuring-rod of the materialist." Asceticism is not a peculiarity of mysticism, "it has attached to every form and type of religious faith," and the greatest mystics have passed beyond it in their immediate knowledge of God. But mysticism requires education. "We neglect the cultivation of the capacity to see the *invisible*, which is essential to art, to poetry, and to religion." He criticizes severely our Sunday schools and their methods as inadequate centres of spiritual culture. The training of the clergy fails when it does not lead to a first-hand acquaintance and fellowship with God. Ecclesiastical organization fails also when it neglects "the Galilean type of religion—the religion of life." All true religion is a way of life. Luther and Calvin did not escape the influence of organization and ecclesiastical system. What is wanted now is "direct correspondence between religious experience and its expression in forms of thought and organization." A chapter is devoted to the nature of the organization and polity which fits best with mystical religion, and the final chapter on "The Testimony of the Soul" brings together the experiences of eminent mystics and others to show that it is the mystical capacity which underlies all our highest moral and religious attainments. Dr. Jones gives us an inspiring ideal of religious experience, which is a necessary corrective in an age which seems at times content to rest upon ritual and ceremonies, and the outward observances of religion, and to ignore the inward

and spiritual without which they tend to degenerate from the sacramental to the magical.

This is the Tercentenary year of John Bunyan, and to mark the occasion the Religious Tract Society has brought out an edition of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, as John Bunyan wrote it, at the extraordinarily low price of 6d. The edition is illustrated with a number of coloured reproductions of Harold Copping's pictures. The type is excellent. In an Appendix to this Tercentenary Edition, under the title "The Triumph of a Great Book," an account is given of "the part which the Religious Tract Society has played in making the book popular, not only in our own islands, but throughout the length and breadth of the world." The Society may be justly proud of its work in making known this masterpiece of literature and religious teaching. It has issued it wholly or in part in 120 languages. Many testimonies are quoted as to the value of John Bunyan's work. Dr. Arnold, of Rugby, said: "His *Pilgrim's Progress* seems to be a complete reflection of Scripture." Samuel Smith, M.P., knew it almost by heart, and said: "It was in almost every Scottish home, and we cannot estimate what the nation owes to it." It influenced Henry Martyn, Spurgeon, Moody, R. L. Stevenson. Many instances are given of humbler mortals who owe their conversion to this book.

G. F. I.

S.P.C.K. publishes for the Anglican Evangelical Group Movement three booklets of a new series at one penny each.

Canon F. W. Head writes on *What the Church stands for*. His conclusion is that the Church of England stands for Jesus Christ as Englishmen have learnt to know Him in the past, and strive to interpret Him to the generations yet to come.

Canon E. S. Woods gives some useful advice on praying in *How to say your Prayers*. The Rev. W. H. Heaton-Renshaw in *Religion and my Job* shows that it does not matter so much what a man's occupation is as the spirit in which he carries it out.

Mr. J. Ellis Barker, who is the author of several books dealing with matters of health, and has written specially on Cancer, has brought out a volume on Chronic Constipation which he describes as "the most insidious and the most deadly of diseases." He treats of its cause, consequences, and natural cure. Sir William Milligan, M.D., writes a preface recommending Mr. Barker's work as "a sound, readable and scientific volume dealing with one of the commonest and most insidious complaints to which mankind is subject." (John Murray, 7s. 6d. net.)