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Book Reviews.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY PIETY.

By W. K. Lowther Clarke. S.P.C.K. 10/6 160pp. With illustrations.

As Editorial Secretary of the S.P.C.K., Dr. Lowther Clarke has had access to a large number of documents and records, which he has made the subject of diligent research. On resigning his office, he gives us some results of his studies. Its purpose, he tells us, is to contribute to the history of that Society, by summarising the books published by it in the eighteenth century and by telling the story of its Secretary for the greater part of the first half of that period, Henry Newman. The rest of the book consists of a number of separate studies of interesting personages and phases of Church life in and about the period: the author confesses that he sometimes goes outside the century of which his title speaks; as, for example, in the chapter on "English Church Life in 1850."

The opening chapter represents the first part of his main purpose. Under the title "Pastoralia," with sub-headings such as "Churchmanship," "Church Services," "Home Life," etc., it places on record the titles and purposes of a great number of publications, and indicates the impressions gathered from the author's researches. The main result appears to be that, in his opinion, Church life, and individual spiritual life, were not altogether at so low a level at that time as some accounts have represented them to be. So far as the records of the S.P.C.K. show (which are all that he is immediately concerned with), "the one thing we shall not find," he says, "is any spirit of complacency." Manuals explaining the Church service imply "a very high level of devotion." Church-going on Sunday was represented primarily as a duty; "there was no thought of making services 'attractive.'" Some quaint touches appear here and there. An Irish Archbishop attacked "that *subsaltory* way of delivery, that rises like a storm in one part of the period and presently sinks into a dead calm that will scarce reach the ear," and pleaded for a revival of "that almost antiquated exercise of expounding the Holy Scripture to your congregation." Such counsels are not out of date to-day!

At the same time, Bishop Gilbert Burnet deprecates the bad state of the Church, and the ignorance of candidates for ordination, and the neglect of pastoral care; and expresses the opinion that "one cause of the growing atheism and impiety here and in Europe" was "the low opinion of the clergy," owing to their worldly lives. And the author himself acknowledges that in the Prayer Book religion he has described "the emotions were, if not starved, at least not adequately fed."

An especially interesting point of detail, for Evangelicals, appears in the following sentence in the section on Holy Communion—"As regards doctrinal emphasis, I can find no sign of any belief in the Real Presence in the form often taught to-day; the entire emphasis is on the reality of the Gift."

For Henry Newman, the Society's secretary from 1708 to 1743, Dr. Clarke has a profound admiration. The story of his life and work, and of his relations with the family of the Du Quesnes, occupies two chapters, with numerous extracts from private correspondents, sometimes illustrating contemporary life; giving glimpses, for example, of events connected with the accession of George I and George II. Next follows a chapter on the Charity Schools. Perhaps it is rather surprising to find one on the Homilies in a book with this title, but it will do good by calling attention to the real value of "these famous but largely unread" exhortations. The rest of the book is taken up with the separate studies already referred to.

These are upon subjects of a varied character. Many readers will find them the most interesting part of the book. For instance, we have the vivid picture of a dispute connected with a Suffolk Grammar School; the story of Patrick Gordon, naval chaplain and F.R.S., whose book "was apparently the first attempt to arouse interest in Missions among the members of the Church of England," and who "must have contributed greatly to the stirring of conscience which led to the foundation of the S.P.C.K. and the S.P.G." Dr. Bray, Bishop George Horne, Good Mrs. Trimmer, and Mrs Ewing are among the other subjects of these pleasant and informing chapters. The description of Church life in 1850 has some startling facts about simoniacal transactions; some of the other advertisements in *The Ecclesiastical Gazette* of the period are entertaining. Here is one which illustrates the author's own sense of humour. He asks, "Was the applicant who wanted a curacy where he may have a chance of 'conforming to the liturgy' a simple soul or a humorist?" It looks as if history is repeating itself a century later! A Society calling itself "The Church Association," mentioned in this chapter, is plainly shown, by the context, to be unconnected with the one now known under that name.

A feature of some of these later chapters is the shrewdness of their concluding sentences, which sometimes seem purposely to modify a one-sided impression which might be derived from their contents. It is interesting to note this feature in a chapter on Mr. Brocklehurst of Lowood, a character in *Jane Eyre*, a clerical schoolmaster and apparently an Evangelical—of a severe type—who is treated with some severity in this description of him, though there is an admission that Mrs. Gaskell said a good word for him, and that improvements were introduced. In his closing words Dr. Clarke adds a mitigating circumstance which he felt should in fairness be reckoned with.

He has plainly endeavoured to be fair; nevertheless, here and there one wonders whether there is an unconscious bias against Evangelicalism. Or is Dr. Lowther Clarke occasionally confusing it—as so many have done—with Low Churchism? On p.138, he speaks of Dickens' first period of writing (apparently in the 1830's) as falling "within a time of unchallenged Evangelical supremacy." The Rev. G. R. Balleine, in his "History of the Evangelical Party in the Church of England," declares that the widespread idea that on the eve of the Oxford Movement (*viz.*, just at the time referred to by our author) the Evangelicals were dominant, "has arisen through confounding them with their opponents, the Low Churchmen" (mark the word "opponents"!) Conceivably, this may account for a few isolated items in the present volume.

It must be admitted that a chapter recording an Evangelical protest against the S.P.C.K. reveals that this contained some absurdly exaggerated criticisms which do not at all correspond with any Evangelical teaching to-day. But, on the whole, one doubts whether Evangelicals have had a fairly proportioned amount of attention in this book. The very nature of Dr. Clarke's inquiry may partly account for this impression. He deals, in the opening chapters, entirely with the S.P.C.K. and its associations; and possibly Evangelicals had not the same closeness of connection with the Society that others had. Still, there were assuredly Evangelical clergy of a more attractive type than Mr. Brocklehurst; and if our author can go outside his main subject to trounce Mr. Brocklehurst, it would have been nice to find him giving us one of his delightful portraits of one of these—or, let us say, one of the notable laymen of the period (neither Wilberforce nor Shaftesbury appear in the Index).

It remains to notice the series of eight interesting plates, with seventeen items—reproductions of old portraits, and of Prayer Book illustrations, etc., which throw visual light on the educational and ecclesiastical outlook of the times.

W. S. HOOTON

REASONING FAITH.

Canon T. C. Hammond, M.A. 5/- I.V.F. 275pp.

The Inter-Varsity Fellowship is to be congratulated upon having secured a new book on Apologetics from the fertile mind of Canon Hammond. Those who have read his former books will look forward to finding illumination and spiritual profit in *Reasoning Faith*, and they will not be disappointed; for here we have the author at his best, his wide scholarship and philosophic thoroughness finding full scope for their exercise in this congenial subject.

The treatment is original and thoroughly modern, for whilst Canon Hammond insists on the value of standard works such as Paley's Evidences, he devotes himself here to meeting the chief objections raised against the Christian religion during the past 40 years. These are fairly faced, carefully examined and fully answered.

They are divided under the headings of Philosophic, Scientific and Historical Objections, and a section is given to each.

In the first section he deals with Materialism, Agnosticism and Pantheism including Behaviourism. He puts down much popular Agnosticism to intellectual indolence. He writes, "We all like to be relieved of the obligation to work. This particular temptation is most insistent when we are asked to work our minds." When intellectually lazy persons encounter a difficulty, "we are not surprised that it is impatiently rejected, labelled 'metaphysics', and left there." Far different from this is the author's own style, for every objection is patiently and carefully examined and no difficulty shirked.

The section closes with a brilliant chapter on *The Epistemology of Bertrand Russell* in which he subjects the assertions of this "recent pilgrim to the shrine of philosophy" to "searching analysis in which fallacies and assumptions are exposed, with fairness and courtesy but with ruthless and penetrating logic."

The second section will be specially interesting to all students of science. It begins with a discussion of that ambiguous expression "the scientific outlook", and thus devotes itself to the theory of evolution. The author criticises "the popular delusion that the world is divided into two classes, scientists who face facts, and believers who shut their eyes to them." He proceeds "The scientist who clothes himself in a linen overall and examines a retort tube is the embodiment of impersonal reason and strict impartiality. The clergyman who puts on a linen surplice or a black gown is, on the other hand, the embodiment of ill-regulated prejudices and refined popular superstitions."

On this reckoning Canon Hammond, who is impartial reason personified, should surely find his place among the "scientists"!

His examination of the theory of evolution and the objections based upon it is painstaking and thorough, and he is always careful to understate rather than overstate his case. He deals with the ideas of "creative" and "emergent" evolution, and with the evidences of palaeontology and embryology, with abundant quotations from standard works. He reaches the conclusion that the Bible account of Creation depends "on great general principles which science in its own sphere confirms" and "utters nothing that science is able to contradict". As to evolution "there is no form in which it can be presented, in loyalty to observed facts, which excludes Design", and this can better be explained by the existence of "an ordering Mind", than by attributing it to a mystical internal 'Force', or a personalised 'Nature'.

The final section is devoted to modern efforts, including "Form criticism", to explain away the supernatural elements in the Gospel story. One objection after another is shown to be fallacious, and the older and more objective manner of dealing with the evidence is proved to be the more satisfactory.

The book requires and deserves some hard thinking, but it has the advantage of going to the root of the scholarly arguments upon which popular objections are founded and meeting them on their own ground. Holy Scripture is always treated with reverence and the general result is greatly to strengthen faith. It abounds with dry humour, is well printed and produced, and marvellously cheap at five shillings.

G.T.M.

THE DIVINE AND HUMAN ENCOUNTER.

By Emil Brunner. pp. 151. 8/6 net. S.C.M. Press.

The announcement of a translation into English of another work by Dr. Brunner will arouse interest not only amongst the devotees of the Barthian theology, but also amongst a still wider public who desire to keep abreast of the best thought of our time. The lectures here printed were delivered as far back as 1937 in the University of Upsala in Sweden, and were to have been published in England in the following year, only the outbreak of war frustrated the attempt. The main theme of these lectures, which Dr. Brunner admits to have been suggested to him by a Professor of the University, is concerned with the objective and subjective in Christian Faith. Or, to put it in another way, "the central theme of this slim volume," as the Translator says, "can be simply stated: When God meets man, Christian truth comes into being". The whole problem, therefore, is to be viewed not as a general philosophical problem but essentially as a theological one. It is to the mind of the Author essentially a matter of Biblical truth. Any conception of the apprehension of revealed truth as an intellectual process savours too much for him of Greek philosophy which is inevitably alien to the Bible, since he is careful to point out it is written throughout by Hebrews to whom such processes were entirely foreign. The appeal then is to the Bible for "is it not very obvious that the Word of God is what is objectively given, while faith is the subjective appropriation of what is given"?

We cannot pursue the subject of Objectivism and Subjectivism, though on the former subject Dr. Brunner has a good deal to say on the Authoritative aspect of the Roman Church with which Evangelicals will find themselves in sympathy. So much in the history of the Church has arisen from "man's sinful, anxious nature" seeking deliberately for an objective authority for his faith and thinking that he can only find it in a society claiming a monopoly of grace and complete authority. Naturally, he tends to carry the argument further than many Anglicans will be inclined to go; but this does not affect the main argument of the book.

Actually, its main theme turns very largely on the Author's conception of Biblical truth on the one hand, and Doctrine on the other. He emphasizes what presumably most Christians would agree with, the distinction between belief in mere doctrine and a living faith in a Redeemer. He pours rather excessive scorn on doctrines which are only intellectually apprehended. But that is very largely because he has a very clear conception of faith as an active, living response of the whole personality of man. "We are beginning to suspect why in the Bible the word "truth" appears in what is for us a strange context with the words "doing" and "becoming". Faith, which appropriates God's self-revelation in His Word, is an event, an act, and that a two-sided act—an act of God and an act of man. *An encounter takes place between God and man.*"

The same idea of Divine activity lies behind what Dr. Brunner has to say in his chapter on "Truth and Doctrine" on the Work of the Redeemer. He takes his stand on what he regards as the true Biblical doctrine of Christ in which is seen the fact that "The Incarnation as such is not the pivotal point of the Biblical Revelation, but rather the work of the Redeemer. Jesus Christ did not come merely to come, but He came to return". And he immediately adds that "the Bible guides us to ponder less the secret of the Person of Jesus than the mystery of His work". Many will be inclined to agree with this 'non-Incarnational' theology. He adds: The Person of the Mediator must also be understood as an *act* of God, namely, as His coming to us in revelation and redemption." The argument was all the time in the realm of action. Right at the end of the work, Dr. Brunner states: "The truth of which the Bible speaks is always a happening and indeed the happening of the meeting between God and man, an act of God which must be received by an act of man. The truth acting—this is the characteristic unphilosophical, non-Greek way in which the Bible speaks of truth."

This is not a book, of course, which will win universal assent from all English Christians, but it is a stimulating work. Like all Brunner's books, it provokes the reader to much thought and drives him back upon the Johannine saying of Christ, "Search the Scriptures". The main theme is undoubtedly one that is often in danger of being forgotten. Men to-day all over the world need to be brought face to face with God who is also their redeemer and will one day be their judge. That doctrine needs to be proclaimed and this book will help greatly in its proclamation.

C. J. OFFER.

THE FORM OF THE CHURCH.

By A. G. Hebert. pp. 126. 8/6 net. Faber and Faber.

A new book by Fr. Hebert is always something to be awaited with real interest. Ever since his *Liturgy and Society* appeared any book by him is sure of a wide welcome from readers not limited to any one Church or any particular school of thought. He has, we believe, become a favourite writer with Free Churchmen, great as their divergences of opinion and practice may be, as witness Jenkins' *The Nature of Catholicity*. Indeed it was a perusal of this book and the jotting down of observations upon it which led directly to the writing of the present work. Consequently, many will turn to this book with keen anticipation, and though they will meet with much with which they cannot agree, they will at least admire the learning and candour of the writer.

Naturally, the Author writes from the Anglo-Catholic standpoint, but he always displays great variety and considerable breadth of view. Whatever he has to say he says with moderation and a persuasiveness which attracts even those who most radically diverge from his opinions. And this applies to the present work with its intriguing title. Its main theme can best be stated in the Author's own words: "Just as it is necessary to discern behind the order of creation the Creator who gives to it its form, so behind the form of the Redemption we must discern the Person of the Son of God; it is He Who is *The Form of the Church*. Bibles, Creed, Sacraments and Apostles exist only on His account, that we may come into contact with Him. He is the Form into whose image men are transformed when they are redeemed and sanctified." In elaborating this theme the Author has much that is illuminating to say on God the Creator, Redemption and the Church, Unity, Holiness, Catholicity and Apostolicity. And on all of them the Author writes with freshness, vigour and originality. Many, for instance, will turn to the chapter on Unity, knowing the writer's standpoint on this vital subject, to see what line he takes. And in this connection he has much to say that is helpful. "It is always wrong to think of living books by means of metaphors derived from inorganic matter or from machines; limbs of books and twigs of plants cannot be "welded" or "fused together", but must be placed in such position that it is possible for them to grow together. So it is with societies of men, which are constituted as such by their respective forms." And he agrees that "all the Christian denominations have the traditions and customs within which their characteristic types of life have grown up." He rejects the idea that when agreement on all the great doctrines of the faith has been reached, differences on lesser things such as the Church and the Ministry, if they exist, are only superficial. He is probably right here in ascribing importance to these aspects of the problem because, until agreement is reached upon them, differences will continue to exist. And he is surely right in saying that "before there can be true reunion, there must be a revival of *koimonia* within each of the Churches which are to come together." Then again, on the surface anyway, we should agree with the writer when he says: "By sacrificing truth for the sake of unity, we do not get a real unity. When we put Truth first; we find that the Truth has power to unite." Indeed there is so much that is good even on the thorny problems of re-union that one could go on quoting. But there are other statements we do not like so much. Is it a *sine qua non* that "it is round Rome as the centre that Christendom must some day be reunited"? For that matter why must there be one centre only? Why not several *foci* of reunion—Rome, Canterbury, Alexandria? Of course, the crux of the problem is to be found, so far as the ministry is concerned, in the chapter on "Apostolicity" where, again, he has much to say of a mediating character, including a good deal that is well worth noting, such as his remarks on the Lord's Headship of His Church addressed as much to the Pope as any Free Church minister!

In one respect, this work serves very clearly to reveal some of the ruling ideas of those who are so extremely critical of any practical schemes of re-union. In that respect the book makes a very useful contribution. It deserves to be read, particularly by those who will at the outset be more inclined to disagree, both with the Author's main outlook and with his main contention. C. J. OFFER.

PRIVATE AND PUBLIC PRAYERS.

By Wilton Rix. S.C.M. 3/6.

This book of corporate and private devotions has been carefully prepared and the author (who is a Free Churchman) gratefully acknowledges his debt to those who all the way down through the ages, have led their fellow-Christians in prayer, praise and thanksgiving. It is divided into three parts of which the first is the most important, for it is concerned with Prayers and Devotions for a Week's Retreat. It is excellent in its general arrangement and its choice of subjects and, in the opinion of the Reviewer, it supplies perhaps the greatest spiritual need of English Free Churchmen to-day. In recent years they have produced many theologians of the highest standing, most of their ministers are good preachers with many social gifts, but they have made little progress in the underlying principles of Divine Worship and comparatively few of them have learned the supreme value of Quiet Retreats and Ordered Meditation. It may be that this little book will do for the denominations what Acts of Devotion and similar books have accomplished for the members of the established Church. The prayers are gathered from wide fields, liturgical and otherwise. The plan for each day begins with Adoration, then passes to Penitence and ends with prayers for the Church and the World. Each of the six sessions carries some aspect of the Creation and of the Revelation in Christ.

The second and third Parts of the book contain Public and Private Prayers and Thanksgivings for various occasions and in connection with special services and functions.

J. W. AUGUR.

GREAT CHRISTIAN BOOKS.

By Hugh Martin. S.C.M. Press, Ltd. 6/- net.

The purpose of a book of the kind that Dr. Martin has given us is twofold : it seeks to call, or re-call to our minds certain books which have won a place among the classics of Christian literature ; and it provides an introduction to each, with a view to stimulating the reader to become acquainted with the books themselves. This two-fold purpose Dr. Martin admirably fulfils. The books chosen are not exactly what we should have expected from the title. We should, for example, hardly have looked for Browning's "The Ring and the Book" in the same category with William Carey's "The Obligations of Christians to use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens". But it is the privilege of an author to decide on what subjects he shall write, and we have no quarrel with anyone who attempts to rescue Carey's "Enquiry" from the oblivion into which it is in danger of falling, partly because it is not easily obtainable, and partly because it does not directly serve the purpose of a book of devotion. It is, however, an amazing production as coming from a village shoemaker who had little education but what he could acquire for himself ; and it is a witness to the unquenchable thirst for knowledge, the careful attention to detail, the passionate zeal for the conversion of the heathen and the powers of plodding, persistent work, which marked all his subsequent labours in India and gave him a foremost place, as an Evangelist an organizer and a philologist, among missionary pioneers and educationalists of modern times.

As to "The Ring and the Book", somewhat incongruously juxtaposed to the "Enquiry", Dr. Martin's lucid appraisal and analysis will certainly encourage some readers who, like the present reviewer, have more than once vainly attempted its eight hundred and fifty pages, to renew their efforts with greater hope of success.

The other five books discussed are more in line with what we might expect in a selection of this kind : St. Augustine's "Confessions" ; "The Letters of Samuel Rutherford" ; Brother Lawrence's "The Practice of the Presence of God" ; Bunyan's "The Pilgrim's Progress from this World to that which is to come" ; and Law's "Serious call to a Devout and Holy Life". The introductions are judicious and discriminating and furnish the reader with a useful guide. In that to the "Confessions", Miss McDougall's penetrating reminder is quoted and is worth noting "the true subject (of the 'Confessions') is not the wanderings of Augustine, but the love of God." We cannot, however, forget that beside the Augustine of the "Confessions" there was Augustine the rigid theologian whose encouragement of the persecution of heretics is, as Dr. Mart in points out, a lasting blot on his memory. He was an uncompromising predesti-

narian, going to the full as far, if not beyond, anything that Calvin ever wrote; and it was he who taught that unbaptized infants could never enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Augustine was a great saint and a great thinker—the greatest, it has been said, between St. Paul and Luther—but he lived in the latter half of the fourth century and the earlier half of the fifth, and was unable to shake off the prevailing influences of his times.

The Letters of Samuel Rutherford (1600-1661) are somewhat exotic for these days, their emotional and often ecstatic language being of a pattern unfamiliar to us; but it was familiar enough in Scotland among the Covenanters of the 17th century and there is abundant evidence that they helped to sustain the faith and stimulate the hopes of those brave and devout men who were being persecuted even to the death for maintaining the rights of conscience and, as they put it, "the Crown Rights of Jesus Christ". We may think them fanatical, and their consciences unduly tender, but they have left us an example of inflexible courage, unimpeached integrity and entire absorption in the fear and love of God.

Brother Lawrence (1610-1691) a contemporary of Rutherford, but in another land, was of the same spirit though its manifestation was of a less fiery and energetic kind. Nicolas Herman was born at Lorraine of peasant parentage; he records his conversion at the age of eighteen, but it was not until he was forty that he entered the Carmelite Order as a lay brother in the Paris monastery, taking the name of Lawrence, and was put to work in the kitchen. He spent the next forty years of his life here, the last ten being given to lighter duties. Amid the uncongenial tasks of a monastery kitchen, he walked joyfully and humbly with God, endeavouring to practise always the consciousness of His abiding Presence. If "the rhythm of adoration and work" can be maintained in such circumstances, there can be none where it is impossible. Difficult it may be, but the difficulty lies usually more in ourselves than in our circumstances.

"The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,
But in ourselves. . . ."

Of the Pilgrim's Progress not much need be said here except to wish that so accessible and readable a book were more read at the present day than it is. Dr. Martin's introduction gives ample reason why it should be. Bunyan was a master of simple easy English and the interest of the story carries us easily from stage to stage as it proceeds; while the lessons which Bunyan would impress upon us are so plain and obvious that the dullest readers can hardly miss them. "Christian," who is portrayed as a pilgrim, is a man in deadly earnest as he advances towards the Heavenly Kingdom. Our Lord did not indulge his followers with any easy-going view of what discipleship meant. It would tax all their energies: they were to strive, to watch, to pray, to labour; and Bunyan drives this lesson home in the Pilgrim's Progress.

Law's "Serious Call" has the same purpose as its companions in this group, but its method and appeal are different. It draws upon reason, common sense and logic more than upon the emotions. "Now let any one but find out the reason why he is to be strictly pious in his prayers and he will find the same as strong a reason to be as strictly pious in all the other parts of his life." "If we are to follow Christ, it must be in our common way of spending every day." The conclusion is inexorable and we cannot escape it. Law is addressing those people—and their number in his day was very great—who are careful to attend Church on Sundays, while at all other times they live as loosely and carelessly as do those who never pray or see the inside of a Church at all. A book which profoundly influenced such men as John and Charles Wesley, Whitefield, Thomas Scott, Henry Venn and Samuel Johnson, must, as Dr. Martin says, clearly be a remarkable book. Let us take Dr. Johnson's testimony: "When at Oxford I took up Law's *Serious Call*, expecting to find it a dull book (as such books generally are) and perhaps to laugh at it. But I found it an overmatch for me; and this was the first occasion of my thinking in earnest of religion after I became capable of rational enquiry." Law's line of argument and his intense earnestness are as much needed in our day as in his, though we have to adapt a good deal of what he says to suit our changed circumstances and social conditions.

Dr. Martin has given us a good book and introduced us to a noble company. We cordially commend it and hope that it will have a wide circulation. W.G.J.