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Editorial.

THE expressions of appreciation which we are constantly receiving and the increasing demand for "The Churchman" are sufficient evidence that as a Theological Quarterly it is meeting a real need, and we are encouraged to know that our policy of securing the co-operation of Evangelical scholars in its production is supported by our subscribers.

There is need for authoritative teaching, especially on those questions of doctrine which are vital, and yet which so often divide us. If, therefore, "The Churchman" can be the medium for the expression of best modern scholarship on these vital questions, we are persuaded that we are rendering a service of real value to Evangelicals.

Whatever our views may be on Evangelical doctrine, we do not limit our list of contributors to only those whose writings we can fully endorse. It needs to be remembered that as Evangelicals we are intensely individualistic, we glory in possessing the right of private judgment, and because of this it must not be expected that uniformity in the realm of intellectual belief in the matter of Evangelical theology is any easier than in matters of order and worship. Also our Evangelical traditions would lead us to expect new light to break forth on old truths, yet we recognise that there must be limits to intellectual toleration, there is a dividing line between truth and error, beyond which it is not possible to go without compromising truth.

As indicative of our policy, we are including in this issue two papers which were originally read at conferences of Evangelicals. The paper by the Rev. T. ISHERWOOD on the important and complex subject of the "Authority of the Bible" was read at the Evangelical Fellowship of Theological Literature. The author has kindly amplified the paper for the benefit of our readers.

The paper by Dr. BABBAGE on "Evangelical Theology" was given at the Fellowship of Evangelical Churchmen and was heard with deep appreciation, we are sure it will now be read with interest, together with the remaining articles by other contributors.

The Authority of Scripture.

BY THE REV. T. W. ISHERWOOD, M.A.

ANY worth-while consideration of The Authority of Scripture must take account of two basic and related facts. First, it must be remembered that our problem is, for all its peculiar importance, but one aspect of a much bigger and broader question,—the ground and nature of Authority, as a whole, for the religious attitude to life. Endless, and often unnecessary, perplexities attend the discussion of Scriptural Authority as though unrelated, for example, to the Authority of the Spirit and the Authority of the Church. Our final Authority is God Himself, as He acts by His Holy and Life-giving Spirit, as He speaks to men by His " Word written ", as He indwells and guides and uses His Church. It is, of course, inevitable that for purposes of orderly thinking we fix attention now on one, now on another, of the various related aspects of Authority in religion ; but that they *are* related must never be overlooked. Second, it is a pertinent fact that in connection with Scripture the problem of religious Authority takes a special and concrete form. The Holy Scriptures, as we have received and acknowledge them, remain with us from generation to generation. The Church, by contrast, is obviously an incomplete and growing fellowship, and for all of us except, perhaps, members of the Roman Communion, an undetermined body. Leaving aside the vexed question of the Apocrypha, no one contemplates a revision of the corpus of Holy Scripture. With our Bibles before us it ought, one might imagine, to be if not an easier, at least a simpler, task to define, in so specialised an area, what we mean by Authority. But hard experience to the contrary is a sobering and salutary corrective !

Nevertheless, we begin by noting that from days long antecedent to the Christian dispensation Authority came to be associated with writings which now have their place in the Holy Bible. We need not here recall the stages and problems of determining first the Canon of the Old Testament and then the Canon of the New Testament, except to remark that the whole process and story remain meaningless and inexplicable apart from the assumption that men recognised within the Scriptures which they thus accepted a special and compelling authority. The pursuit of a Canon of Holy Scripture, the acceptance of some documents and the rejection of others, argues a sense, and indeed an explicit recognition, of authority. It is hardly less significant that continual dispute, sometimes hardening into more or less bitter controversy, has attended the attempt to define the precise nature, practical force, and relative limits, of the Authority of Scripture. The Christian Church has never been able either to escape from the recognition of the Authority of Scripture or to reach a general, still less a detailed and final, settlement of the problems which that same recognition raises ! Sometimes these problems have seemed so urgent, and of such serious consequence, that we could hardly have been surprised had the issue in its entirety been abandoned. Yet the fact

remains that no constituent part of the Christian Church has ever renounced at any rate a theoretical recognition of the Authority of Scripture.

It is of similar significance that the recurrent conflicts which have rent the Church into the schismatic communions which now make up her total fellowship have never imperilled a belief in Scriptural Authority. East and West, Roman and Reformed, Episcopal and non-Episcopal, all Churches confess the Authority of Scripture. Nor is this claim invalidated by the fact that their conceptions of the nature, operation and limits of Biblical Authority show wide differences of theory and interpretation, differences which, indeed, are sometimes irreconcilable. The Church of Rome, for example, asserts her recognition of Biblical Authority in what she holds to be a real and effective sense. And if, as we believe, her conception of Biblical Authority is, for practical intents and purposes, subordinated to the Authority of Tradition, it is well to reflect that the Protestant Authoritarian is not infrequently liable to the same course of action, by substituting a private judgment run riot where Rome applies Tradition! Again, the Liberal Protestant has his idea of Biblical Authority, and holds it sincerely, though conditioned by what he regards as a scientific attitude and approach to the whole phenomenon of experience. It would seem, therefore, that the Authority of Scripture is inextricably bound up with essential Christian experience, and that only by denying the latter can we escape from the challenge of the former. At the time of the Reformation, the Church of England made a valiant effort to face that challenge in a new way, and in special connexion with the issues, doctrinal and practical, which then confronted her. Some of us still believe that the position adopted, and even the language employed, in the Sixth Article of Religion, represents a quite outstanding, and an extraordinarily discerning, recognition of the nature, and within due limits the supremacy, of Scriptural Authority. Nevertheless, as Evangelicals loyal to this principle of Reformed Anglicanism, we are not thereby excused from the duty of giving fresh thought to the practical problems which it raises nor, indeed, to the ground upon which it rests.

The concern of this article is with the Authority of Scripture as it relates to the outlook of twentieth century Anglican Evangelicals. Two lines of thought are suggested for consideration, not, indeed, as covering the whole field of relevant enquiry, but as introducing the issues that are most urgent. What is the **ground** of our recognition of the Authority of Scripture? This is a question which concerns all who, as *Evangelicals*, and whether in or outside our own Communion, stand in the Reformed tradition. What is the **relevance** of Scriptural Authority? That is a question of particular interest for us who, as *Anglicans*, inherit an outlook and a temper of which the specific expression was that Article of Religion to which reference has already been made.

First, then, as to the ground of our recognition and acceptance of the Authority of Scripture. To establish some sort of proper focus and perspective we must briefly notice the situation as it has developed during, approximately, the last seventy-five years. Our own responsibility and our own problem are, indeed, prefaced, and in part deter-

mined, by two earlier conceptions of the ground of Scriptural Authority. These two conceptions, to a brief consideration of which we shall turn, may be summarised by recalling two phrases which were frequently used as formulæ for differing theories of Biblical Inspiration. We are, however, fully justified in adopting them for our present purpose, for they are intimately related to the question of Scriptural Authority, and it is not difficult to understand why this must be so. The Authority of Scripture is an inevitable inference from the belief that in any real sense "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God." To confess such a conviction implies a real authority inherent in Holy Scripture as it also, incidentally, raises sooner or later the problems which proceed from the recognition of Divine and human relationships in a creative act.

Three-quarters of a century ago the Authority of Scripture would, for almost all Evangelicals, have seemed as simple and unquestionable a fact as the plain assertion that "The Bible is the Word of God," with implied emphasis on the verb employed. The position thus held admitted no doubt either of the ground, or of the force and extent, of Biblical Authority. To that same extent, also, the problem which concerns us was non-existent. It was, indeed, not understood, or even imagined, to exist. For the decay of this once widespread assurance outside influences, of which Darwin's "Origin of Species" and the alleged onslaughts of Higher Criticism are the most frequently cited, have often been held responsible. It is as reasonably certain as anything can be that they were at most innocent occasions, rather than responsible causes, of what was to follow. The causes, indeed, lay much deeper, and were within, rather than outside, this conception of the ground of Scriptural Authority. It is not here necessary for us to examine in any detail the elements of error in a position which, let it be recognised with justice and sympathy, attempted an explicit loyalty to what is, after all, an indubitable fact, namely, that the voice of God reaches men through Scripture *as a whole*. But lest we seem to evade loyalty to truth as we see it, let us briefly note certain facts. Such an idea of Inspiration, and such a ground of Scriptural Authority, failed to recognise that clear and essential distinction never more clearly asserted than, within Scripture itself, in Hebrews i. 1-2,—or, if conscious of the distinction, failed to grasp its implications. It failed to recognise the conditioning quality of human sinfulness and human fallibility. It failed to take sufficient account of the actuality of that long and gradual movement, progressing through successive, and inevitably imperfect, stages until it reached its fulfilment in God's Self-revealing and man-redeeming action in Christ. It failed—and perhaps this was its most serious failure—to observe the vitally important distinction between "God's Word Written" and that final Word which is "the Word made flesh"—the Word that was "with God" and that "was God". And finally, it did not sufficiently allow for the fact that the Scriptures themselves are dependent upon the illuminating ministry of the Holy Spirit if they are to reach and arrest us with an authoritative Word.

It has been necessary for us to concentrate attention upon those elements of weakness or failure which compromise a particular theory of a vital truth and an acknowledged authority. But because the truth

could not be sacrificed, nor the authority repudiated, an effort was made to rescue them from the theory, from which men were turning. The effort, moreover, tried to make full provision for any demands that could reasonably be made in the name either of Natural Science or of Modern Theology. It can be said to have been crystallised in a phrase common in Liberal Protestant circles during the last thirty years. "The Bible," it was said, "contains the Word of God," again with implicit, and often quite aggressive, emphasis on the verb employed. It was, of course, hotly opposed by all who still stood by the older point of view. But for others it had the force of a new revelation! It was hailed as a statement free from all the old objections, and protected from all the old dangers. It was urged that it claimed enough without demanding that "too much" which could not be justified. Its very form was, indeed, suggestive of a corrective, and if we accept the general principle of "thesis, antithesis, synthesis" as applying to all developments of human thought, we may be ready to grant that it represented an inevitable reaction. None the less, it was, at any rate in the opinion of the present writer, a glaring example of self-deception. Two considerations seem sufficient to establish this apparently sweeping judgment. It is obvious, in the first place, that while claiming to solve, it merely evaded, the essential problem. It did little to tell us where or how to be sure that we had found the Word of God contained in the Bible. It was theological escapism in its blandest form. But much more important and serious, secondly, is the fact that this alleged corrective had the practical effect of setting "God's Word Written" under human judgment. It left with the individual reader of Holy Scripture the responsibility of deciding where the Word of God was to be found, or of accepting on another authority a decision to that effect. Thus, though perhaps without knowledge or intention, man was continually put in judgment over the Word of God rather than placed under the sovereign authority of its judging power. The dangers of this attitude were, perhaps, most obvious in connection with the Old Testament. At the very least, it produced a debilitating uncertainty as to its general relevance and its power to become the medium and instrument of the Eternal Word. At its worst, it permitted mention of the majority of the Psalms and the nobler excerpts from the prophetic writings as alone holding any message for us moderns! From such a tragic error the earlier assertion, with all its mistakes, was at least free, and if, for the reasons already given, "the Bible is the Word of God," must be described as a theologically inaccurate statement, "the Bible contains the Word of God," stands under judgment as spiritually pernicious and, in the end, surely destructive of any compelling Authority on the part of Scripture *as a whole*. It always tends towards, if it does not always end in, spiritual complacency in the presence of a Holy Scripture where the only proper attitude is an expectant humility. And that is the precursor of unbelief, at any rate for the ordinary man in the street, as it is also a convenient escape for the pride that is unwilling to obey, and unready to hear, the Word of God.

"So what?"—as our American friends say! We are left with our inescapable and intuitive recognition of the Authority of Scripture, but without, it would seem, any satisfying theory of its nature and

ground. It is quite certain that for most of us there is no possibility of retreat to either of the two positions which we have examined but have felt ourselves compelled to abandon. On the other hand, we cannot rest content with mere negation. Both for ourselves and for others it is obligatory and imperative that we find surer ground upon which to rest our experience, and our understanding, of the Authority of Scripture. Greatly daring, the present writer would offer for consideration a third formula which despite, and perhaps partly because of, its limitations does, in his opinion, assert what is true and recognize what is beyond definition. It is that, in fact, "The Bible conveys the Word of God", the emphasis once again resting on the verb employed. The phrase is submitted in a sense which suggests that the God Who spoke "unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners" and Who has "at the end of these days spoken unto us in a Son" can, and does, use the permanent and received records of His Word to be the ever present and "immediate medium" of His living voice. Proclaimed, applied, heard, and received by the light and power of the Holy Spirit the Bible as a whole becomes a living instrument whereby God is vocal and imperative for the lives, needs, and conditions of men. No one may presume to say where, or when, or how, the instrument shall be used. All other considerations apart, such presumption puts man in that judging relationship to which, as we have already said, he has no conceivable claim. And it is apt to make him deaf to some particular word that he most needs to hear!

Whatever else may be said, the claim that the Bible, as a whole, conveys the Word of God is at least true to personal and pastoral experience. Every one of us, for instance, knows that a verse of Scripture, hitherto irrelevant, if not meaningless, may under some new circumstance become alive, illuminating, imperative, in fact the very voice of God Himself! Every prophet of the Word, preaching as one who is in no doubt of the power of "God's Word Written" to prove indeed the medium of the God Who speaks, knows how often that Voice reaches men through recorded words and events which he himself would not have been likely to use, and this fact cannot be explained away by recourse to merely psychological considerations. If we were more humble and more attentive, we should also be less surprised! And grateful as we are for all that modern scholarship has done to save us from superstition, and to lead us into a fuller understanding of the historic situations which provide the conditioning context for the sacred Scriptures, we nevertheless assert that no limit is thereby set to the power of "God's Word Written" to speak to the needs and conditions of sinful men. Of course there are parts of the Bible which read by comparison with, and in the light of the fulness of God's Word, "the Word made flesh", "the Word of the Cross", are primitive and crude. And there are men and societies living on precisely the level where that cruder and more primitive Word can reach them, can address itself to their immediate need and condition. Further, he must be strangely blind to his own need and condition who lightly assumes that he has outgrown the challenge of the more primitive Word, even though he be "a man in Christ".

There are, however, yet weightier reasons for the conviction that the Authority of Scripture is inherent in the wholeness of the record. This

is not the occasion to examine them in detail, but they may well receive a brief and summary notice. To begin with, the simple fact that Holy Scripture demonstrates throughout a totalitarian integrity makes it not unreasonable to expect that it is capable of proving anywhere, and at any time, the medium of God's living Voice. Bound up with this is also its sustained interpretation of the age-long movement, and meaning, of history. Throughout the Bible, history is seen "*sub specie æternitatis*", and not merely in terms of a philosophy but of a personal directing purpose. As Christians, we are apt to take this idea in our stride, forgetful of the fact of our indebtedness for it to the great Library which, through such an astonishing variety of periods, circumstances, and human authorships, makes so consistent an assertion that God is, in the end, in control of history. Our ground for belief in a divine purpose through history is inseparable from the Bible as a whole, which thereby exercises over us an indispensable and unique authority in this regard. Again, there is the fact that Holy Scripture maintains an unbroken relationship of judgment over human affairs. From the opening chapters of Genesis onward to the Revelation vision of a triumphant purpose man individually, and men in the societies which they collectively form, continually stand under the authoritative and operative judgments of God. This relationship of the judging Word of God to man is assumed rather than asserted, and never defended by philosophic arguments. There is an abiding relevance about these judgments, a relevance which means "authority" in its most unmistakable form. If anyone doubts this, let him read "Amos" and apply its judgments to the world in which we live! Again, there is the sustained, and total, and unique relationship of Holy Scripture to Him who was "in the beginning" the Creative Word of the Eternal God, and in time the Agent of a perfected Redemption. He is at once the theme of the New Testament, the crown and key of the Old Testament. Thus He gives a personal integrity to "all the Scriptures", as He abundantly established on the road to Emmaus. Because of His authority for us they have a relative authority which we can never forget. Our dependence upon them for our understanding of Him is, at any rate, some indication and measure of their sustained authority over us. Finally, there is an authority inherent in the continual relationship of Holy Scripture to that redeemed and redeeming community which God has chosen and created to be the instrument of His purpose, and to which we ourselves, by grace through faith, belong. For us this means in a special sense the Christian Church, but it is important to recognise that the instrument is of far earlier origin. Its history goes back at least to the "call" of faithful Abraham, is continued in "the church in the wilderness", and involves both the old Israel and the new Israel in the one progressive purpose of God. So close and complete is the relationship between the community and the written word that it has produced the long debated and vexed problem of the priority of related authorities, whether the Church or the Bible. Some of us feel with increasing conviction that both the one and the other of the traditional solutions of that problem are mistaken. Perhaps the very problem proceeds from confusion of thought, but at least its existence is not without significance. Certain it is that behind Holy Scripture and the Church alike, and, therefore

behind their respective authorities, is the prior and absolute authority of the God whose creative word and purpose accounts for them both.

The ground upon which the Authority of Scripture rests, and the manner in which that Authority is continually exercised, cannot be better expressed than in words which we quote from Professor Hodgson's recently published Croall Lectures on "The Doctrine of the Trinity." It should be noted, lest we make his words seem to serve a thesis of which he might not wholly approve, that his concern, in the opening chapter from which the quotation is taken, is to make explicit the contention that "the divine revelation is given in acts rather than words" and that those acts constitute the essential 'datum' of revelation. Understanding of this principle is a condition, the writer believes, of a right approach to the doctrine with which he is particularly concerned, as, indeed, to Christian Theology in general. Here, however, are his words. "The eyes of the biblical writers were opened to see the significance of certain events as the key-feature for the understanding of the Universe. They proclaim that these events manifest God's redemptive activity, and by surveying the Universe from this standpoint, they are enabled to recognise elsewhere His creative and preservative activity. The Bible comes to us in the form of propositions because only by statements in the form of propositions could those whose eyes were opened bear record to future generations of what they saw. It is not these propositions as such which are the *revelatum*. They bear record to the *revelatum*, but as the ages go by they can only continue to mediate the revelation in so far as in each generation men's eyes are opened to see for themselves the significance of the revelatory acts of God to which they bear witness."¹ Our concern has been to try to establish that in the fact of the opened eyes of the biblical writers; in their sustained witness to the revelatory and redemptive activity of God; even in the indirect evidence of the limited insights of such a writer as "the Preacher"; not least in the proved and abiding power of these Scriptures to "continue to mediate the revelation"—men's eyes being opened to see, their ears to hear; in **all** of this we have ground large enough and firm enough upon which to rest our assertion of the Authority of Scripture.

In turning to consider the relevance of the Authority of Scripture, we do well to remind ourselves again that, real and cogent as that Authority assuredly is, we may not rightly hold it "in vacuo", or as if it were absolutely unconditioned. Holy Scripture is both the witness and the instrument, and therefore also the servant, of the Divine purpose. The appointed end and mission of all Scripture has been sufficiently clarified for us. It is twofold,—in the well-known words of St. Paul, both "to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" and "that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work"² We note that these words also imply the existence of the Christian Church, which is at once the fellowship of those who are saved and called to good works, and the community to which, in which, through which, the Word of God is spoken. The Authority of Scripture is relevant alike to the individual Christian within the community and to the community as a whole. So far as the individual Christian is concerned, he must always remember that he has been "begotten again . . . through the word

of God which liveth and abideth" ³, and that whenever the Word reaches him through Scripture it is "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness" ⁴ Therefore, also, in the words of D. T. Jenkins, "The Christian 'examines himself', according to the exhortation of the Apostle, scrutinising his whole existence in the light of God's Word, Jesus Christ, and is thus moved to repentance and faith, crying 'My Lord and my God'." ⁵ But only as this word is proclaimed and heard through the Scriptures, and by their authority, can the scrutiny be maintained. The Community, on the other hand, exists to proclaim the Word, and is itself nourished and preserved by the Word. If it is true that "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation" (Article VI) it is not less so that "the visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure Word of God is preached" as well as one in which "the Sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same" (Article XIX). And we do no more than state a simple fact of experience when we reflect that it is a much easier business to guarantee the due administration of the Sacraments than to guarantee the preaching of the pure Word of God! Nevertheless, the preaching of the pure Word of God is vital and indispensable to the true Catholicity of the Church, the continued due administration of the Sacraments (which, though we too often forget it, are themselves dramatic preachings of the Word of God) and, indeed, to the health and purity alike of the congregation and of the individual faithful man therein. Church history bears sad and continual testimony to the danger of our being "corrupted from the simplicity and the purity that is toward Christ." ⁶ The only antidote is such a perpetual preaching of the Word of God that simplicity and purity are preserved. And in this connection those final and significant words "toward Christ" will repay careful thought. The genuine proclamation of the Word is always, by the sheer nature and necessity of the case, "toward Christ". So also, must be any true growth and development in the community for "as he is, even so are we in this world." ⁷

It is in true line with the claim that we have tried to make for the relevance of Scriptural Authority within the Church to develop a little further the statement that it is not "absolutely unconditioned" nor, therefore, unlimited. Error both attends and follows alike the tendency to assert too much, and to allow too little, for it. In this connection a passage from Hooker's "The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity" is so pertinent that it may justifiably be quoted at some length. "Two opinions therefore there are concerning sufficiency of Holy Scripture, each extremely opposite unto the other, and both repugnant unto truth. The schools of Rome teach Scripture to be so insufficient, as if, except traditions were added, it did not contain all revealed and supernatural truth, which absolutely is necessary for the children of men in this life to know that they may in the next be saved. Others justly condemning this opinion grow likewise unto a dangerous extremity, as if Scripture did not only contain all things in that kind necessary, but all things simply, and in such sort that to do anything according to any other law were not only unnecessary but even opposite unto salvation, unlawful and sinful. Whatsoever is spoken of God

otherwise than as the truth is, though it seem an honour, it is an injury. And as incredible praises given unto men do often abate and impair the credit of their deserved commendation, so we must likewise take great heed, lest in attributing unto Scripture more than it can have, the incredibility of that do cause even those things which indeed it hath most abundantly to be less than reverently esteemed." ⁸ No comment on this quotation is necessary, except perhaps to add that some of us have been more critical of the one tendency than careful to avoid the other !

No mention has yet been made of the relevance of Scriptural Authority to the life of communities other than, and beyond, the Christian Church. Here, obviously, our problem finds its most difficult and debatable form. On the one hand, it cannot be denied that the whole of human life, and therefore every human society, is ultimately subject to the Authority of the Word of God, and in such a day as our own it is not hard, granted a Christian interpretation of history, to understand that judgment is always, and in a sense automatically, operative. But how is the Authority of Scripture to secure recognition and obedience in the affairs, for instance, of a nation which, like our own, is nominally Christian but very far from actually so? It is, for all practical purposes, a merely academic question whether the Church ought to legislate for the life of a largely pagan society. Argument may go this way or that, but the fact remains that she cannot impose authority beyond the will of the people to recognise and obey it. One course, however, is open to us. The greater the obedience of the Church to the Authority of Scripture the clearer will be her witness in, and her impact upon, the life of larger communities in which she is set to act as "salt" and "light". We ought to be able to say, more definitely than is yet the case, what is the law and will of God for any human society, or situation, when spiritual issues are involved. In proportion as the due and proper Authority of Scripture finds obedience within the Church is she also able to say to the world "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good" ⁹—"Whether they will hear or whether they will forbear" ¹⁰ It may well be that when we have properly faced this demand upon us we shall have clearer light upon more detailed issues !

A few practical observations may fittingly serve as conclusion to an article which has attempted little more than a survey of a pressing and complex problem. If there is any validity in our argument it must be obvious, first, what good cause for gratitude we have to those who, in the stormiest days of the history of our Church, defined and directed reformed Anglicanism in relation to the Authority of Scripture. It is dangerously easy for some of us to be unduly complacent, and for others of us to be unduly critical, about the "Reformation Settlement." But in this, certainly the most fundamental of the contemporary issues, there is room for no doubt that their intuitions, and their leadership, were sound. Both the positive declarations, and the reserves and restraints, of our Articles of Religion are sufficient evidence in this connection. Over-definition would have been easy—it always is in days when men are profoundly stirred about controversies of faith and practice—and it might have been fatal. Happily, it was avoided. Equally grateful should we be for the fact that the redrafted

Services of our Church make remarkable, some would go so far as to say unique, provision for her sons and daughters to live under the Authority of Scripture. If we fail to do so it can hardly be the fault of others, certainly not of the Reformation divines. We do well to bear this always in mind.

Secondly, there rests upon every one of us the solemn responsibility of continual submission to the due and proper Authority of Scripture. There are many points of view from which this responsibility might be illustrated: one, only, must be mentioned. In what kind of spirit do we anticipate, and hear, the public preaching of the Word? Many who gather for worship seem to regard it as hardly better than a tedious irrelevance, a convention not yet outgrown, to be judged chiefly in respect of its length—or brevity! There are others who profess to love the preaching of the Word, but test its authenticity by the yardstick of their own self-assured orthodoxy. If it conforms thereto it is “sound”; if otherwise, it is “unsound.” Assuming, for the moment, that the prophet has put himself under the authority of the Word before daring to speak in the Name of the Lord, what folly this is on the part of the hearer! To sit under the Authority of Scripture is always to be subject to disturbance and challenge, to “reproof” as well as to “instruction.” “For the Word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature that is not manifest in His sight: but all things are naked and laid open before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.”¹¹ Every detail of thought and action ought to be held under the judgment of the Word, and never for one moment can any of us presume to suppose that its authority has been sufficiently or finally faced. Cornelius, ill-instructed, or at least inadequately-instructed, as he must have been when Peter visited him at Cæsarea, nevertheless reveals an attitude of mind and heart perpetually incumbent upon us. “Now therefore we are all here present in the sight of God, to hear all things that have been commanded thee of the Lord.”¹²

Last, living as we are in days of judgment and of convulsive change, when a hundred voices urge the claims of as many causes, not a few of them specifically in the name of the Christian Church, we may seriously ask whether the greatest and the most enduring of our real needs is not that of an assured succession of prophets of the Word, who have learned both to sit continually under its authority and, also, rightly to handle the “Word of truth.”¹³ Some of our present needs are urgent, but, we hope, such as may be met, and ought to be met, with some degree of conclusiveness in our own day. “Putting our house in order” is a phrase which aptly describes one of them. Others are of a more enduring nature, but are conditioned by factors and circumstances which are themselves in process of change. Here is a need which remains essentially the same, intimately related, as it is, to the age-long nature and mission of the Christian Church. If the supply of authoritative prophets fails, the health of the body suffers. And, humanly speaking, we must never take for granted that it will not fail or, at least, be tragically diminished! Some of us feel strongly that this need, and this danger, ought to be a prime consciousness with all

who are responsible for directing, or imparting, teaching in any theological College. The prophet's work is not exhausted by what is often called "teaching the faith"—the faith often being regarded in far too static a sense. Still less is it fulfilled in the practice of using an isolated "text" as the contextless pretext for a philosophic, or "topical," discourse! Two voices, one from the past, one from the present, hold a challenge which every prophet of the Word must face. Calvin, describing his own approach to the Doctrine of the Trinity, says "For me here, as elsewhere in the deep mysteries of Scripture, one should philosophise soberly and with great moderation, taking great care lest either thought or speech should go beyond the limit of God's word."¹⁴ The Editor of "Theology," in the course of a recent article concerned with the present-day authority and relevance of "The Tables of the Jewish Law," reminds us that "In any case, Christian preachers, commissioned to expound the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, should not be uncertain where they ought to go, and to what they ought to call attention."¹⁵ They certainly should not! But occasionally they are!

¹ *op. cit.* p. 35.

² 2 Tim. iii. 15, 17.

³ 1 Peter i. 23.

⁴ 2 Tim. iii. 16.

⁵ "The Nature of Catholicity": D. T. Jenkins, p. 95.

⁶ 2 Cor. xi. 3.

⁷ 1 St. John iv. 17.

⁸ *op. cit.* Book II, Chapter viii. § 7.

⁹ Micah vi. 8.

¹⁰ Ezekiel ii. 5.

¹¹ Hebrews iv. 12-13.

¹² Acts x. 33.

¹³ 2 Tim. ii. 15.

¹⁴ Quoted by Professor Hodgson: *op. cit.* p. 166.

¹⁵ "Theology": Dec. 1943, p. 267.

Evangelical Theology.

BY THE REV. S. B. BABBAGE, M.A., Ph.D., C.F.

I HAVE been allocated the subject, "Evangelical Theology." It is well that we clarify our terms of reference. Our subject is *evangelical* theology. The word "evangelical" not only qualifies, but determines our theology. It therefore means, negatively, that our theology is not erected upon any humanistic or philosophic basis: it is positively erected on the foundation of the Word of God. Our theology is grounded or founded, on the Evangel or good news of God's saving act in Jesus Christ. The Pauline statement that "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. iii. 11), although having a primary reference, to the only basis on which an individual can build his Christian faith, is nevertheless, equally essential as the basis for an intellectual formulation of the faith. That is to say, our theology is grounded in the revelation of God in Jesus Christ.

Such a warm evangelical conception of theology is in diametric opposition to those conceptions of theology which have been prevalent during the last few decades. Let me quote from McConnachie:

"The root cause of the crisis in the Church and in the pulpit is to be sought in our theology. Recent theology has been a very human, man-centred concern, making much of relative values, like history and psychology, but strangely silent about the Word of God, as a Word of absolute authority. It has skilfully rounded off the rough edges of the Cross to make it fit into the building of modern thought. It has ignored the eschatological side of the Gospel as being little better than what Dean Inge has described as 'Jews' old clothes', and it has kept the Last Things out of sight. Strongly apologetic in its interests, it has caught eagerly at any crumbs of comfort dropped by scientists in its anxiety to appease the modern mind. There have been great exceptions, of course, men like Dr. P. T. Forsyth, Dr. Denney and others, who have refused to bow the knee to the Baal of Modernism, but the general tendency has been in the opposite direction."

(*The Barthian Theology*, p. 24.)

Inevitably the presuppositions on which a theology is constructed will affect the whole of the superstructure. If a theology is erected on the liberal conception of the natural goodness of man, sin will be interpreted as ignorance or weakness, rather than as rebellion and pride against God. If a theology is erected on the naturalistic basis of evolutionary progress, the Kingdom of God will lose its eschatological significance, and will be identified with some human Utopia. Theology will only remain true to its task, as it bases itself on the evangelical doctrines of sin and judgment, redemption and grace. Theology must be "evangelical theology."

While evangelical theology is grounded on the Word of God, it is, at the same time, necessarily related to the changing needs of successive generations. We rightly believe that our faith was "once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3), but although our faith remains eternally the same, the garments in which it is clothed will change from age to age. Thought-forms tend to become old and antiquated

and archaic. The truth needs to be restated and clothed afresh in modern concepts. The faith must be made living and vital and relevant : it must be elucidated and explained. Further, it is inevitable that problems should vary from time to time, and that different facets of the faith should need to be emphasised to meet the varying needs of particular periods. Consequently, the faith itself remains the same, while the comprehension, interpretation, and presentation, will change with each successive age.

The interpretation and presentation of the faith in terms of contemporary life is the prime task of theology. Because of the flux and change that attend all historical development, and the differing needs of new generations, it is futile to attempt the revival of a dead theology. Each age needs its own theology ; that is, a theology which is a living reality through its relationship to the needs of that age. Thus theology is the perennial concern of the Church. No doubt it has been this vital and dynamic character of theology which has given it the title of "queen of the sciences."

Since theology is concerned with nothing less than the right manner of preaching of the Evangel, the Church must continually meditate and reflect upon the proclamation of the Word of God. The whole task of theology—the interpretation or presentation of the faith—is to enable the Word of God to have "free course and be glorified." "Theology means *ministerium verbi divini* (the ministry of the Word of God) and nothing else", (Barth). For this reason, evangelical theology must be the concern of all ministers of the Gospel. The task of the preacher is, the proclamation of Christ and Him crucified, and this, in essence, is the task of theology. As Barth truly states, theology "endeavours to take what is first said to it in the revelation of God's reality, and to think it over again in human thoughts and to say it over again in human speech . . . It articulates again the articles of faith."

While the task of the preacher and the theologian are basically the same, there is plainly a difference in function. The difference is really a difference of service. "The work done by theologians is not done for a small group of people with an interest in that hobby," wrote P. T. Forsyth twenty-five years ago, "it is not sectional work at all. It is done first of all for the preachers and their preaching, and through them for the public on the question of most universal moment." And the testimony of Karl Barth is parallel : "The dogmatician is the teacher *in* the Church *from* the Church *for* the Church, not as savant, but as one who has vocation to teach." The theologian is not indulging in some idle intellectual game. He is acting responsibly as a watchman, criticising, examining, safeguarding the Church's proclamation. He continually weighs the proclamation of the Church, testing its genuineness by reference to the real judge : the Word of God. As John the Baptist pointed to the Christ, so theology points from the confusions and conflicts of contemporary life to the revelation of God.

But what is the Biblical justification for this concern with theology, even though it be evangelical theology? The justification must be found in the fact that theology is the daughter of doctrine, and in the New Testament, doctrine is the handmaid of faith. The New Testa-

ment contains no such abortion as a non-doctrinal faith. God's gracious acts in Christ all have doctrinal implications. The first Christian preachers did not just preach mere historical facts about Christ and the Resurrection; they preached those indubitable historical facts, but they also preached an interpretation of those facts, which gave to those facts their significance and value for faith. As bare facts of historical interest the deeds of the New Testament have little more than antiquarian significance. For instance, the Cross at the most can only be a tragic episode of casual interest, unless it be seen by faith as the place where the Son of God was made a sin-offering for us. It is the ineradicable conviction of the Christian Church that at Calvary an eternal redemption was wrought for mankind, and it is this conviction which gives to Calvary its eternal and sacred significance. Further, Paul has left us a record of the apostolic faith—the Kerygma—with which he was entrusted. It was a doctrinal inheritance: a Gospel. "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received," says St. Paul, "how that Christ died." That was the historical fact. (I pass over the striking fact that even in this historical statement Paul uses the doctrinal term "Christ"). But what Paul received was more than this: it was an interpretation of this fact: "How that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures:" (i Cor. xv. 3). And when Paul says "for our sins" he makes a doctrinal statement. He rises from history to doctrine. This is no Pauline eccentricity. Doctrine is woven as warp and woof into the whole of the New Testament. It is found in the Synoptics. Christ Himself taught that "He must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day" (Matt. xvi. 21). This was no reckless and impulsive act of self-sacrifice; it was the deliberate surrender of His life as a ransom for many. It was the laying down of His life for the sheep. Thus the Cross was not the unfortunate martyrdom of the Galilean Teacher—such would be the interpretation of a non-theological liberalism, which had discarded the doctrinal interpretations of the New Testament—but for faith it was the place where God acted in holy judgment and saving grace. Consequently, the New Testament conception of the faith and the apostolic preaching, implies doctrine, and doctrine implies theology.

To recapitulate: evangelical theology, based on the Evangel of Jesus Christ, seeks to facilitate the proclamation of the Word of God by expounding the biblical doctrines in terms which are relevant to the contemporary situation. The history of theology will reveal the attempts which have been made by the human spirit to "seek some clothing of conception for its faith, suited to its degree of knowledge and culture." (Orr). Theology must therefore be the continual pre-occupation of the Church: a task of perennial concern to the ministers of the Gospel. Neglect will lead to ambiguity and confusion in the matter which is our prime concern—the proclamation of the Word.

Let us examine the question concretely. There are certain doctrinal principles which remain the same throughout the ages. These are the principles which were re-affirmed with such clarity by the Reformers: the fallen state of man, original sin and the enslavement of the will; salvation, mediated through Christ the Redeemer, and

appropriated by faith; the sovereignty of God, etc. Evangelical theology will tenaciously hold these and such like doctrines, for many of these doctrines have been rightly exalted into dogmas in the credal and confessional statements of the Church. At the same time evangelical theology will recognise that different periods of history demand different emphases: inevitably certain aspects of theological controversy and concern become antiquated and irrelevant with the passage of time. It is worth noting, in passing, that the great subject disturbing theologians in the post-Reformation period was sub- and super-lapsarianism, that is, the question whether God merely permitted or ordained the fall of Adam. This question is now only of historic interest. It is natural that theologians today are concerned with matters which were either taken for granted or were ignored in yesterday's theological controversy. It is, therefore, imperative that we diagnose today's situation, so that we reach a resultant emphasis appropriate to our need. The present catastrophic conditions of contemporary life suggest at once certain obvious emphases: God's providence in history, crisis and judgment, eschatology and the Christian doctrine of the resurrection. A diagnosis of the present situation will reveal the futility of optimistic humanism, the precarious character of secular civilisation and culture, the radical nature of evil and the depths of iniquity to which men may sink, the paganism and superstition of much so-called modern belief, the inherent pride of man, and the reliance on the "gods" of nationalism, whether they be totalitarian or democratic "gods." It is for this reason that a truly evangelical theology will regard as irrelevant, such discussions as are prevalent in our circles about conditional immortality and millenarianism. As sublapsarianism speculated about matters at the beginning of time or before time, so these present day preoccupations concern matters which belong either to the end of time or after time. In any case they are speculative and hypothetical: they are side-issues unrelated to the desperate needs of sinful men and women. The task we are called to is proclamation—kerygma—uttering the call of the herald who makes known what no one has known before and who comes as a bringer of Good News.

It is significant that a revival of theology is a feature of the universal Church; it is not the prerogative of evangelicals. To some extent the unparalleled nature of the present world crisis is responsible for this revival: the shaking of things that are, has led to a search for things which cannot be shaken. On the one hand, this has led to a fresh interest in Thomist philosophy and theology, on the other hand, to a revival of neo-Calvinism.

I have been asked particularly to deal with some of the specific contributions which contemporary Continental thought can be expected to make to our evangelical theology. For the broad general outline of what follows, I am indebted to Dr. Walter Marshall Horton's book on Contemporary Continental Theology.

In the first place, neo-Calvinism has reaffirmed the crucial centrality of the Word of God. It has asserted that the biblical revelation is the norm, by which all theological formulations must be judged. The Bible is the central pillar on which the whole edifice of Christian theology must rest. Man needs to come to the Word of God to be

judged, not to judge : the attitude of the Christian scholar must be one of reverence and humility and submission, so that he hears God the Holy Spirit speaking in the Word. For the evangelical theologian the Bible is significant to faith, not because it is classic literature, not because it is primitive history, not even because it is a compendium of moral ideas nor because it is a treasury of spiritual insight, but because it is the revelation of God. "The Bible has once more become to us what it was to our fathers, a personal Word from a living God, speaking directly to our present state." (Horton). It is interesting to read how the Bible became a living reality to Barth. His friend, Thurneysen, has described how they found themselves without a gospel to preach : "We read the Bible in a new way. We read it more respectfully, more as an eternal Word addressed to us, and to our time. We criticised it less. We read it with the eyes of shipwrecked people whose all had gone overboard. The Bible appeared in a new light. Beyond all interpretations, its genuine word began to speak again ; the word of forgiveness, the Gospel of the coming Kingdom. . . ." Subsequently Barth gave expression to his conviction that the Bible is the Word of God to man. "It is not the right human thoughts about God which form the real content of the Bible," Barth wrote, "but the right divine thoughts about man. The Bible tells us, not how we are to speak to God, but how God has spoken to us, not how we are to find a way to God, but how He has sought and found a way to us." This emphasis is fundamental to any right approach to the problems of the theology.

Secondly, Reformed theology on the Continent has been led to stress the transcendence of God. Soren Kierkegaard, during the first half of last century, uttered his polemic against the pantheistic confusion of the Creator and the creature : in contradistinction to all this, he asserted the infinite qualitative distinction between God and man. It is not easy to appreciate Kierkegaard's contribution, for he created a completely new terminology. He spoke of "existential," the "Moment," "tension," "contingent contemporaneousness," and "the impact of the perpendicular upon the horizontal." But his most insistent theme was that "we are always in the wrong as against God," for God is in heaven and we are upon earth. Thus he will have nothing to do with the so-called God, reached by inference from the moral law, as with Kant ; neither will he have anything to do with the so-called God, reached by speculative thought, as with Hegel ; nor with the so-called God, reached in the depths of feeling, as with Schleiermacher. (Martin). God is the One known through the leap of personal decision in response to the challenge of Christ. He is the Absolutely Different, the Wholly Other from man, the God Who remains hidden in His judgment and wrath, until the leap of decision is made. In all this Kierkegaard was prophetically protesting against the immanentist evolutionary pantheism of the optimistic nineteenth century. The lesson he taught has been well learnt by the theologians of neo-Calvinism, and we ourselves do well to remember that God is the transcendent Lord, Whose thoughts are not our thoughts, and Whose ways are not our ways.

Yet again, the Continentals have caused us to realise afresh the dread abysses of sin into which men may, and actually do sink. No

writer has been more responsible for this new realisation than the Russian novelist Dostoievsky, although he himself declared that he was "a child of unfaith and scepticism." It was his peculiar contribution to illustrate the imperishable reality and worth of the free human spirit, even when it was manifested in crime, insanity, and self-destruction. More particularly, he described the tragic depths which are present in every human soul. In his later writings he glimpsed the truth that through free surrender to Christ, the God-Man, the human urge to freedom might find fulfilment.

While Dostoievsky showed from life the dread cancer of sin in the lives of men, Kierkegaard showed psychologically that the sense of fear under the stress of the consciousness of guilt, leads to despair.

"Man in time is confronted by the judgment of the absolute, and turn where he will, to aesthetics, to ethics, or to religion, he cannot escape that consciousness nor find any solution of his existence. Sin then is the fundamental fact of man's spiritual and moral position, the rock on which all philosophical attempts to explain the world and man's position within it, are wrecked. It is a basic disturbance of life, a final contradiction of man's being. 'Sin,' says Kierkegaard, 'is the gaping wound of human existence'; it is not something which man does but something which he is, in himself, the qualitative ruination of his inner being. It stands for the autonomy which man asserts for himself as against the absoluteness of God, and thus sin is being in untruth. Until therefore man comes to the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, whatever he does is sin, since he himself is in the untruth in his relation to the absolute reality of God."

(Martin, H. V. : *The Prophet of the Absolute*, pp. 38-9).

It is good for us to be reminded of the reality and depth of sin : "our offence is rank : it smells to heaven : " it is rebellion against a holy and righteous God.

Fourthly, the Continentals have seen the power of evil in all its stark awful ramifications. Otto Piper and Karl Heim have affirmed their belief in the activities of a personal devil, while others have more cautiously spoken of satanic and demonic forces. Evangelicals have not tended to minimise the devices and deceptions of the devil, but it is significant that the pressure of historical circumstances on the Continent has exploded the shallow liberal dismissal of the power and ubiquity of evil. The biblical record is emphatic that we wrestle against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. (Eph. vi. 12). The rise of totalitarian demagogues and dictators, has added fresh point to the Johannine testimony that already there are many antichrists. It has become patent that this is no rhetorical exaggeration ; the spirit of the evil one is rampant and malevolent.

Further, both Bishop Aulen's "Christus Victor" and Emil Brunner's "The Mediator," have led to a new study of the Atonement. The fresh realisation of the demonic power of evil, has led to a new consideration of the cosmic aspects of Christ's redemption. This is only re-emphasising what Paul declared in the Epistle to the Colossians: that Christ in His Cross not only blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, but also spoiled principalities and powers (the satanic powers spoken of in Ephesians), making a show of them openly, and triumphing over them in it—that is, in the Cross. (Col. ii, 15). Thus a recovered understanding of the enormity of evil, and sinfulness of sin, has led to a fresh realisation of the profound

significance of Christ's redemption. It has banished any cheap and hasty ideas of the Cross. Dr. Horton makes this comment : " so soon as these dark realities (of sin) begin to take cosmic proportions, it becomes evident that the problem of world deliverance is a three-cornered affair, involving the rescue of man from the cosmic powers of darkness as well as from the darkness in his own nature, and the resulting alienation from God. "

It would be possible to amplify the contribution which the Continentals are making : it would be possible, if time allowed, to speak of the new conception which has developed of the relationship between Church and State, a conception which has been conceived under the stress of conflict, and the duress of concentration camp ; it would be possible to speak of the new approach which has been made towards a biblical eschatology ; it would be possible to explore the new conception of the paradoxical relationship of time and eternity, where eternity ceases to be time endlessly prolonged, but becomes a category infinitely and qualitatively different ; it would be possible to show the fuller interpretation of faith as a decision of the whole subjective personality in the moment of believing ; but the topics which have been enumerated ; the Word of God, the transcendence of God, the depths of sin and evil, the reality of Satan, the atonement, are sufficient to indicate the relevance of Continental theology to our own task of formulating for our day and generation an adequate and satisfying evangelical theology. Taking our stand on the biblical revelation of the Word of God, we must avoid on the one hand the Charybdis of humanism, and on the other hand, the Scylla of quietism : our evangelical theology must correct both " the humanistic stress upon the value of works in themselves on the one hand, and the pietistic stress upon faith alone which so often leads to quietism. " (Martin).

Imputed Righteousness.

A Misunderstood Doctrine.

BY T. MILLER NEATBY, M.A., M.D.Camb., M.A.Lond.

THE critics of Evangelical teaching have found, in the past at any rate, a favourite target in the doctrine of "imputed righteousness." If they do not shoot at it so much now, is it because they think their past assaults have left them nothing to shoot at or is it because they disdain pot-shots at a sitting bird?

When the writer, now very many years ago, was a member of the C.I.C.C.U. (Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union), he was upon one Sunday evening considerably surprised by a speaker at the old Victoria Hall referring with contemptuous disparagement to "imputed righteousness." *He* did not want "imputed righteousness"; what he was after was "imparted righteousness."

Really, of course, he should have wanted both. For no man will ever attain to "imparted righteousness" (in the sense in which the speaker used the phrase) who has not first received "imputed righteousness." Moreover, no doctrine is more dogmatically taught in Scripture than "imputed righteousness," or more clearly viewed by St. Paul as integral and even fundamental in his evangelical scheme.

The speaker, a Fellow of his college, was a very earnest man, but theologically ignorant—as ignorant on this particular point as the ordinary non-Christian caviller. He thought that "imputed righteousness" was a legal fiction, an unreality, a sham—a calling men righteous, godly, holy, who were well-known to be unrighteous, ungodly, unholy: as if God's remedy for the "ungodliness and unrighteousness of men" against which His wrath was revealed were simply to ignore them or to confound moral distinctions by arbitrarily calling white what was obviously black.

It is important to recognise at the outset that the "imputation of righteousness" is used by St. Paul in the early verses of the fourth of Romans as if it did not differ from "justification." For the argument here is that Abraham was not justified by works but by faith, as the Scripture had declared long before the theological formulation of the doctrine—"Abraham believed God, and it was counted" (reckoned or imputed) "unto him for righteousness." Whatever criticism can be levelled against "imputed righteousness" can also be levelled against justification.*

It is important to recognise in the second place that justification is not making a man just or righteous. The Greek word beyond any question signifies to account or constitute, in a legal sense, righteous.

* Too often the A.V. seeks a picturesque but misleading diversity by translating in words of different roots, Greek words that are all formed upon the same root. It would be an advantage if the great words of the third and fourth of Romans could be translated uniformly instead of being sometimes "just" or "justification" and sometimes "righteous" or "righteousness." But our language is probably not equal to this task.

The term is of forensic import. For in point of fact the sinner in the early chapters of Romans is a guilty man in a court of law. Many a theologian, when he comes to deal with justification and the Atoning work on which it rests, shies like a frightened horse at the notion of anything forensic. St. Paul did not share their timidity.

Indeed, only from the forensic view can the language of St. Paul be understood. This, of course, has been frankly recognised by some "liberalising" theologians, as *e.g.*, by Hastings Rashdall amongst Broad Churchmen and by Vernon Storr among "Liberal Evangelicals"—men who have equally frankly expressed their disagreement with St. Paul. But many, to whom forensic interpretations are quite as uncongenial seek—with more modesty but, perhaps, less candour—to engage the Apostle in support of their own (more or less) non-forensic interpretations.

Thus Dr. Micklem in his recent booklet *The Doctrine of our Redemption*, while admitting that the sinner is "acquitted" (a term, surely, of forensic implication), contrives at the same time to render it doubtful whether his doctrine of "acquittal" is truly Pauline. "Metaphors," he says, "taken from law-courts can never be adequate to our relations with our Lord, who deals with us, not on a legal basis, but in grace." No single metaphor can, of course, be adequate to all our relations with our Lord; but the assertion that He deals with us not on a legal basis but in grace is at best ambiguous, at worst erroneous. To deny any legal basis to God's justifying action is to subvert entirely the Pauline doctrine of "acquittal." True, "by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified;" but that, as we shall see, does not exclude a legal basis of justification.

That "justification" forensically understood is the "poor relation" condemned to sit "below the salt" is shown by Dr. Micklem's further remark that "'justification' means 'acquittal,' but even more it means 'deliverance'." No evidence from St. Paul's own writings is adduced in support of this view. But recourse is had to a statement of Professor Dodd's that "justification" in the *Hebrew Bible* means "an act by which a wronged person is given his rights, is vindicated, delivered from oppression."

This may be true enough. But Dr. Micklem boldly inverts the relationship of God and the sinner by assuming that it is the sinner who is the "wronged person" deprived of his rights. "Thus" he says, "when God is said to 'justify the ungodly,' this means, not, as modern usage might suggest, that He condones their ungodliness nor even that He deems them to be godly, but rather that He delivers them from the bondage of ungodliness."

On the contrary it is God who is the wronged party; whose sovereign rights have been infringed; whose honour must be vindicated. This was the natural view of the "Hebrew Bible." God was to be justified when He spoke, the Psalmist said. Elihu's wrath was kindled against Job "because he justified himself rather than God." As for the justification of man, that was an unsolved problem. "Enter not into judgment with thy servant," said the Psalmist, "for in thy sight shall no man living be justified." And wistfully Job asked, "How should a man be just with God?"

But in the covenant of grace the old "Hebrew" problem was

resolved. In the Death of the Cross God is "just"—His wrongs are triumphantly redressed and His righteous throne is vindicated; and at the same time He "justifieth"—He constituteth righteous—the sinner that believes.

Dr. Micklem's conclusion that justification means, in the greater part, deliverance from bondage to sin, seems to bring us round to the illegitimate view that *δικαιοῦν* does after all mean "make righteous." As Dr. Micklem would not, of course, attribute such a meaning to the Greek verb, can it be that in his view the sinner is indeed accounted righteous, but only because he has first been made righteous through deliverance from sin's bondage?

As a matter of fact the energies of the new life communicated at the same time with imputed righteousness and manifested in "yielding our members servants to righteousness" are not the subject of the first four chapters of Romans; they are dealt with later, notably in chapters six and seven. "Imputed righteousness" cancels sin; imparted life "breaks the power of cancelled sin."

In the third place, we have to inquire in what way or ways a man can be legally righteous. There are two ways: either he has not broken the law or he has paid the law's penalty. The apostle is quite clear, and the conscience of man confirms him, that the first way is closed to him—"by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified." The only other way is the payment of the law's penalty.

And that is where "the righteousness of God" comes in. This righteousness, being a righteous standing in the eyes of the law, is clearly not God's quality or attribute of righteousness (though it must be something consistent with it). It is a righteous standing provided by God. Weymouth well translates Romans 1. 17, "For in the gospel a righteousness which comes from God is revealed." He is borne out by St. Paul's words in Phil. iii 9, where for the simple genitive of Romans is substituted a prepositional phrase—*ἐκ θεοῦ*, "proceeding from God." That "God's righteousness" cannot be His quality of righteousness is further shown by the apostle's reference (Romans x. 3.) to the Jews as "ignorant of God's righteousness." Now God's inherent attribute of righteousness was well-known to the Jews.*

Always this "righteousness" is spoken of as something coming from "God" or imputed by "God," without any distinction of the Persons of the Trinity. The reason is simple. It is a *Divine* righteousness in sharp antithesis to that *human* righteousness which man "goes about to establish" by "the deeds of the Law." It is what God gives in contrast with what man does. It is with significant unanimity that the Scriptures speak of "the righteousness of God,"

The only way, as we have seen, in which a convicted sinner can be

* It might be asked why in these passages the word *δικαιοσύνη*—a word naturally and usually expressing a quality—should be used in preference to, say, such a word as *δικαίωσις* used in Rom. iv. 25 ("was raised for, or on account of, our justification"). It may be that St. Paul was anxious that the quality or attribute of righteousness in God should not be lost sight of in the gift or bestowment that He was offering to faith. And indeed we find the two meanings blending in Rom. iii. 26; "to declare . . . God's righteousness: that he might be just (personally righteous) and the justifier of (the bestower of a righteous standing upon) him which believeth in Jesus."

quit of the law is by enduring its penalty. As death—that is, exclusion from the presence of God—is the penalty of sin, we may say that it is only as a dead man that the sinner can conceivably be freed from the law. Only as a dead man can he be “righteous.” We are confronted then, with the paradox that this is the “righteousness” offered by and coming from God. What is the solution of the problem?

Let us consider how this “righteousness” actually becomes operative or “available.” It is on a principle of faith. And what is the hidden working of this faith? What secret springs does it unlock? That question is answered in the sixth of Romans, where the significance of the rite of baptism is unfolded. There we learn the full content of that faith—the facts that are implied and the processes that are concurrent, however little realised by the believer himself.

In a deep sense of need and with a feeling that God can meet that need, he has put his faith in God’s Son. In a blind groping way he has cast in his lot with the Crucified One. In so doing, whether he realises it or not, he has identified himself with Christ crucified. In the overwhelming waters of baptism he declares himself dead—“buried with Christ by baptism into his death” (Rom. vi. 4).*

Against such an one the law has no case. As he rises from the immersing waters he declares himself risen again with Christ—“beyond the Red Sea’s judgment flood.” The law has no more claim upon him than upon Christ. In Christ, with whom he is identified, he has borne the penalty of his sin. Thus has “righteousness” been “imputed” to him.

That the sinner little understands the deep significance or the momentous issues of what he does when he puts his feeble flickering faith in Christ, makes no difference to the facts. What did Abraham know of the Propitiatory Sufferings by which in the end of the age sin would be put away? This question is of specific importance here; for in dealing with imputed righteousness Paul was bound to refer specifically to the case of Abraham, whose faith in God had in a classic passage of the O.T. (Gen. xv. 6.) been declared to be “counted to him for righteousness.” What our Lord precisely meant when He said that “Abraham saw My day and was glad,” we may not dogmatically affirm. But it does not really matter here. Justification is always by faith. But the article of Abraham’s faith was not the foreseen sufferings of the Cross. It was that God would give him a son. But how pregnant of unforeseeable issues was Abraham’s unstaggering faith that God would give him a son!

The justification of sinners in this full noontide of grace is associated with death—the death of the Atoning Sin-Bearer. The justification of Abraham in days of scarcely twilight revelation was, in a figure, likewise associated with *death*. His faith was in the “God who *quickeneth the dead*” (Rom. iv. 17). The son whom he believingly expected he received, as it were, from the *dead*; for “he considered

*Emphasis is here laid upon what was the primitive rite of immersion because the whole force of the Apostle’s argument depends upon it. But this article is purely an essay in Christian doctrine and must not be regarded as laying down any law for modern Christian order or observance. The rubric or Baptism in the Church of England actually gives priority to “dipping”, although the Church, like most Christian churches, has in practice modified the rite.

not his own body now *dead*, nor yet the *deadness* of Sarah's womb" (ib. iv. 19).

In the application that the apostle makes of the twilight type to the age of gospel light there is still the definite reference to death. For "it was not written," we are told, "for Abraham's sake alone, but for us also to whom righteousness shall be imputed, if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offences." It is clear that Paul associated Abraham's justification very definitely with that death which is the wages of sin.

When, then, it is said that the faith of anyone "that worketh not but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly," is imputed for righteousness, it is meant that the man who by faith identifies himself with Christ in His death is accounted "righteous" with the "righteousness" of one who has paid the penalty of his transgression.

There is no unreality or insincerity in imputed righteousness as thus scripturally interpreted. If the believing sinner is identified with the sin-bearing Christ, all the rest follows. Mystery there is, but it is the mystery of how the sinner's trust identifies and incorporates him with the One in whom he trusts—how, in fact, all the believing died in Him who died for all (11 Cor. v. 14).

It is important to note that it is in the death of Christ that our association with Him begins—an association ritually set forth in the burial of baptism. The association once formed is never severed. We rise with Him out of the waters of baptism. We are "accepted in the Beloved," who has died and risen again. We are even now "in heavenly places in Him." But there is no suggestion anywhere in Scripture of our being retrospectively associated with Christ in His pre-crucial life. In that life the Corn of Wheat abode alone. None shared or could share that lonely pre-eminence. Indeed—we say it with reverence—He has Himself not entered heaven on the ground of the perfection of His innocence or of the life lived stainlessly to the glory of God, but by His own blood. Made sin, the self-doomed Sin-Bearer enters heaven by the title of the blood of sprinkling. Only as the Corn of Wheat fell into the ground and died, did it bring forth much fruit. That fruit are we—fruit of His sorrow unto death. In death it is that we are first united with Him.

It is not difficult to see the bearing of this fact upon that strange doctrinal vagary known as the "imputed righteousness of Christ." It is upon the face of it somewhat daring to substitute for the phrase "righteousness of God" which is repeatedly and uniformly used in Scripture the phrase "righteousness of Christ" which is never used. But what exactly is meant by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ? It has thus been succinctly defined: "Christ took over our guilt with a view to its expiation by the enduring of a proportionate penalty: and He makes over to us the merit He had previously acquired by keeping in our flesh the Law that we had broken. Briefly, He assumed our guilt and transferred to us His righteousness—the guilt being breach of law and the righteousness being law-keeping. The transaction becomes complete upon our faith."

We may well ask what passage in the writings of St. Paul or of any other vessel of inspiration can be quoted for such an association of the believer with the pre-crucial life of Christ or for the transference of

Christ's law-keeping to the law-breaker. The holy harmless law-keeping life of the Incarnate Son was infinitely precious to the Father—a smell of a sweet savour to God. It also qualified the Son to be a Propitiatory Sacrifice. But our justification—that Divine righteousness in which we stand—does not lie there; does not lie in any “works of the law,” by whomsoever performed; but only in the Sacrificial Death of “the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.” We are “justified by His blood” (Rom. v. 9)—His blood poured out, that is, by His death.

Here is no imputation of the good works wrought by Christ in His life, but a simple non-imputation of sin on the ground of His vicarious death. That Paul so regarded imputed righteousness is made crystal-clear in Rom. iv. 6-8, where he quotes David as describing the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness. The words of David are “Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.” The imputation of righteousness is, therefore, the non-imputation of sin—acquittal at the bar of God: not on the ground of innocence, but on the ground that the penalty has been paid.

But around the structure of St. Paul's inspired teaching, obscuring its fair and simple outlines, the parasitic creepers of human theology have been allowed to grow up. Thus a modern writer has said: “We are justified through Christ's righteousness. Not only have our sins been put away, but our lack of righteousness.” The idea, unscriptural and erroneous, is that whereas our sins are expiated by the *obedientia passiva* of Christ's Cross, we are also provided with a positive righteousness, the *obedientia activa* of Christ's life. “He has met the law which we could not obey and put His own merit and righteousness to our account,” says A. B. Simpson (*The Christ Life*).

The idea that our positive sins and our negative sins, our sins of commission and our sins of omission, are so radically different that they must have their own several remedies is a very strange idea, uncountenanced in Scripture. The belief that our “sins” are put away by Christ's death but our “lack of righteousness” is remedied by His life, indicates a very defective sense of what sin really is. A “lack of righteousness” is sin. “To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not,” says St. James (iv. 17), “to him it is sin.” To do active injury to your neighbour is sin. But to fail to bind up his open wound is also sin. To hate your neighbour is a grievous sin; but not to love your neighbour is sin, too. The fact surely is that all the Christian's sins, whether of commission or of omission, have been borne by Christ in His death. There is no need (as there is no Scriptural authority) to eke out the transcendent worth of the Cross of Christ. There is no defect in that Sacrificial Death that requires supplementing.

Hagenbach (quoted by Mozley in his *Doctrine of the Atonement*) says that the advocates of orthodox Protestantism weakened the Anselmic doctrine “by adding the *obedientia activa*, since the redeeming element was then no longer exclusively connected with the pouring out of the blood and the agony, but diffused through the whole life and only concentrated in the sacrificial death.” The solitary dignity and sufficiency of the Cross are distinctly impaired by this doctrine of “active obedience.” Anselm's doctrine of the Atonement is gravely defective, but he remarked, very aptly, that Christ could not give

His own obedience for the payment of man's debt since, as man, He owed it to God already.

But it is a legitimate question, How, if the negative evidence of Scripture, that is, the entire absence of any positive or presumptive evidence, so strongly condemns the dogma of the imputed law-keeping of Christ, has it come to pass that this dogma is so widely and tenaciously held?

There is more than one answer to this question. It is easy, and perhaps tempting, to say: "He bore our sins like a garment. We are invested with His righteousness as with a robe." Rightly understood, this may be true. We are indeed "accepted in the Beloved." We are indeed "complete in Him." But we are accepted and complete in the Risen One—in Him who has risen from the dead—in Him who has "passed through death's dark raging flood" and has sunk under the judgment of our sin; not retrospectively in that "holy and harmless" One who "went about doing good," but here and now in the Risen Christ.

There is further a seductive neatness—a tidiness that appeals especially to certain minds—in transferring our law-breaking to Christ and His law-keeping to us. But this savours of ledgers and is alien from the apostle's thought. Paul's great argument in the epistle to the Romans does, indeed, deal with Law—its majesty, claims and satisfaction, but it has nothing to do with book-keeping.

In the next place, there can be little doubt that a misunderstanding, based upon the infelicitous rendering of Rom. v. 18,19 in the A.V., has contributed not a little to the vogue of the "imputed righteousness of Christ." That passage reads: "As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men unto condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

Now here, it is to be noticed, against *one* offence and *one* act of disobedience upon the part of Adam are set in contrast *one* righteous act and *one* act of transcendent obedience upon the part of Christ. This is made clear in the R.V.—"even so, through *one act of righteousness* the free gift came unto all men." The "one act of righteousness" is, of course, the Atoning Work of the Cross.* Similarly "the obedience of one" must refer to Christ's Death as the supreme act of obedience.

The doctrine of the "imputed righteousness of Christ" has been held by a great many earnest lovers of evangelical truth. It is not to be called a "heresy," but it is an error that obscures the simplicity of the gospel and exposes an undefended flank to anti-evangelical assaults.

* The Greek word used here ($\delta\iota\kappa\alpha\iota\omega\mu\alpha$) is a different one from that used in Rom. 3 and 4 of the "righteousness" ($\delta\iota\kappa\alpha\iota\sigma\acute{o}\nu\eta$) imputed by God without works.

The Evangelical Tradition— What We Believe About The Church.

BY THE REV. R. S. DEAN, B.D.

THE Evangelical teaching about the Church is based upon the authorised teaching found in the formularies and liturgy of the Church of England, which from the time of the Reformation have themselves been rooted in Holy Scripture as the sole seat of authority. Article XIX reads thus : " The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same. " That statement plainly asserts the primacy of Faith over Order, and significantly places the preaching of the Word before the administering of the Sacraments, a fact which is further emphasised in the Prayer for the Church Militant which speaks of Word and Sacraments in precisely that order. Its importance for any doctrine of the nature of the Church is plain, for such phrases as above quoted insist that the Sacraments have validity only in consequence of the Word preached, that is to say, they are not bare sacraments, but Sacraments of the Gospel bearing fruit, according to the New Testament, only in the lives of those who have accepted the Word, i.e., those who have manifested the faith that gives the Sacraments their relevance and their meaning according to the purpose of Christ in initiating both Sacraments for the use and acceptance of believers.

The second Post-Communion prayer is consonant with the stress laid by the Article on faith as a basic note of the Church when it says ; " that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of Thy Son, which is the blessed company of all faithful people. "

It is not too much to claim that in these brief notes from the formularies and liturgy of the Church we have the germ of the whole doctrine of the Church as we find it in the pages of Holy Scripture.

Any such review, however brief, must take the Old Testament into serious account, for in this as in all else, to commence with the New Testament is to be like a surveyor disregarding the foundations of the house when he is asked to report on its condition, as well as to set aside the consistent practice of Our Lord Himself. The doctrine makes its initial individual appearance in the call of faithful Abraham and finds its first corporate expression in the book of Exodus in words which are formulative for all later development. " Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people ; for all the earth is mine : and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. " 1

That is to say, Israel was to stand in a special relationship with Jehovah which was covenantal and not of nature, and which was called into being by God and not attained unto by the people. The

emphasis even there is on Faith and Obedience and it was a covenant into which, in a very real sense, all the people were active participants in such a way as to be called a "kingdom of priests." As we know, this office of priesthood could not in the nature of things be performed by every one of the kingdom of priests, and so it came about that one tribe was set aside for the observance and performance of the priestly functions; but the priestly tribe held this relation to God only as the representatives of the whole nation, and it was therefore as delegates of the people that they offered sacrifice and made atonement. In the words of Bishop Lightfoot; "When the sons of Levi are set apart, their consecration is distinctly stated to be due under the divine guidance not to any inherent sanctity or to any caste privilege, but to an act of delegation on the part of the entire people. The Levites are, so to speak, ordained by the whole congregation. 'The children of Israel,' it is said, 'shall put their hands upon the Levites.' (Numbers viii. 10). The nation thus deposes to a single tribe the priestly functions which belong properly to itself as a whole."²

From then onwards the history of Israel as an 'ecclesia' is vastly interesting and highly significant from our present point of view. For while under the terms of the covenant, the whole people continued in a specified relationship to God, it became for the great majority one of outward form rather than of inward loyalty, and it is not long before we see the beginnings of the doctrine of the Remnant which was to play a tremendous part in the nation's history and materially influence the New Testament writers in their portrayal of the nature of the Church. As soon as prosperity waned in Israel, inevitably it needed more and more loyalty and sense of obedience to respond to God in the face of calamities, and equally inevitably the number of people who attained that loyalty decreased. The covenant relationship with the demands it made on faith and allegiance ceases to be the ideal for the nation, and becomes an ideal for a faithful few within the nation whose covenantal position then depends not so much on their biological status as Israelites as on their inward heart and motive. Thus we read in the context of Elijah's conflict with Baalism on Carmel; ". . . yet will I leave me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him."³

This is the beginning of the Remnant, the 'pious kernel' as Dr. Skinner calls them, the Israel within Israel, to whom belongs the promise of the future. That represents a tremendous advance on the original ideal, for while membership in the nation—and therefore into the covenant—came by accident of birth, in the Remnant it is a matter of deliberate choice by the individual—a new relationship which could not be entered into by any other means.

That is plain in what eventually followed. The promulgation of the Deuteronomic law in 621 B.C. by Josiah was in brief a serious attempt to bring the people of Judah as a whole under the obligations and privileges of the Remnant. The conceptions and aims of that book are thoroughly prophetic, for it seeks to realise the hoped-for Kingdom of God as promised by the prophets, and in terms of which Israel is to become a holy people governed by the will of God. But it attempts to do this by external means and that is the secret of its

failure, as Jeremiah very speedily saw and which led him, under God, to enunciate the New Covenant * of which inwardness is the keynote.

The Deuteronomic reform sought to bring about by legislation and ordinance what could only be achieved by deliberate and personal choice. In a word, it is an attempt to make a Church by external order rather than by the response of conscious and inward and voluntary faith.

Time and time again did that happen in the history of Israel, notably in the period of Haggai and Zechariah and of Ezra and Nehemiah, and it emerges against the background of the New Testament in the Pharisees who were a body of men more favourably to be regarded than is customary, and who yet failed because of the self-same-thing—by striving to secure by ordinance which affected the externals of life, that which could only come about by an inward and responsive allegiance of heart and soul. The conflict between faith and order together with all that is implied therein is rooted in the pages of the Old Testament, and we shall have shown ourselves to be but poor students of history if in our own day and age we do not learn the lessons so plainly set forth there. Faith and Order must both be found in any doctrine of the Church, but the primacy of faith and the chaos which results if the order is reversed is a warning plainly and terribly written in the Old Testament. As we leave its pages we can write over them the words of the XIXth Article of Religion, substituting only 'Israel' for 'The visible Church.' . . . "The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of *faithful* men."

When we begin to look at the New Testament we are not surprised to find that it is the same viewpoint which undeniably greets us, and which equally forbids us to allow the equation of Faith with Order. The references to the Church in the Gospels by name are few, in fact the word is mentioned twice therein, and in one of them it has its reference more properly to the synagogue than to the ecclesia. The sole effective reference therefore is that contained in the word of our Lord addressed to Peter at Caesarea Philippi consequent upon Peter's confession, by revelation, of the Lordship of Christ. "Now when Jesus came into the parts of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, Who do men say that the Son of Man is? And they said, Some say John the Baptist; some, Elijah: and others Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But who say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God, and Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon bar-Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee but My Father which is in Heaven. And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." ⁵ From this it is plain beyond doubt that what allowed the divine organism to be founded in the world of men was the human response on the part of Peter. The foundation of the Church was based on and brought forth in historic time by a confession of faith, which is a deliberate endorsement by Our Lord Jesus Christ of the whole tenor of the teaching of the Old Testament on this subject, *i.e.*, that Faith and not Order, inward and spiritual loyalty and not external ordinance and regulation is of the 'esse' of the Church. It is noteworthy in passing, that it is

St. Peter himself who in his first epistle uses the same metaphor of the rock and says to the elect ; " Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ . . . for you therefore which believe is the honour." ⁶ Both the inwardness of the faith and the historical continuity with the Remnant in the Old Testament are unmistakable and amply justify the words of Dr. Streeter ; " The first Christians did not regard themselves as a new society, but as the ancient ' People of God,' that is, that portion of the Church of the Patriarchs and Prophets which had not, by rejecting the Messiah, forfeited its birthright and cut itself off from the ' promises of Israel', " ⁷ and again, " Theoretically Christians were the ' new Israel ;' and members of a ' nation ' scattered amid other peoples have a natural tendency to cohere with one another without the assistance of any external organisation. Hence the precise method of organisation would seem relatively unimportant. Membership of the Ecclesia, the ' congregation of Israel,' was the important thing ; and all who were baptised in the name of the Lord were *ipso facto* members of the ' remnant,' however it might locally be organised." ⁸

A consideration of the references in the Acts of the Apostles is patent of the same result ; after Peter's Pentecostal sermon about 3000 souls were added to the original company of 120 and later by reason of the witness of this body we read ; " The Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved," ⁹ so that here too the word ' Church ' is given to those who had come to the point of allegiance to Christ. Certainly we must add that they " continued daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house " ¹⁰ which implies at least some kind of order, but it is plain that here ' Order ' is not a synonym of ' Faith ' but a consequence of it.

It is in the Acts that we begin to see the use of the term ' Church ' in two senses, first in a universal sense which corresponds with the idea of the Faithful Remnant, and then of the company of such believers in a particular locality, but it is always the first usage which is stressed as primary. Thus St. Paul in his charge to the Ephesian elders says ; " Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in the which the Holy Ghost hath made you bishops, to feed the Church of God, which He purchased with His own blood." ¹¹

These men here called bishops, *i.e.*, ' overseers '—(ἐπίσκοποι) were appointed by St. Paul (whose own office was derived immediately from God and not mediately through any man) to serve the church in Ephesus, yet at the same time their responsibility was not to the church of Ephesus as locally conceived, but to the Church of God. Hugh Martin quotes P. T. Forsyth as saying ; " The local church was the outcrop there of the total and continuous Church, one everywhere." ¹² It is in his desire to give full weight to this conception that the author of I Clement runs the risk of pedantry when he says : " The Church of God which sojourns in Rome greets the Church of God which sojourns in Corinth." It is plain that the sum of Christians everywhere, on earth and beyond, is the Church in the primary meaning of the word both in the New Testament and in sub-Apostolic days. It is not a federation of local congregations for in

the New Testament there are not many churches, but the one Church in many places. The local congregation is the local expression of the one great universal community in heaven and on earth.

Moreover it was evidently possible for a member of the local congregation not to be in fact a member of the Church of God and this possibility has never disappeared, though on the other hand we find in the New Testament no traces of that essentially modern phenomenon—a Christian with no local church membership. That is made clear in the Epistles not only in references too many to collate but also in their general trend and presuppositions. St. Paul can speak of the Church in such terms as these; "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself up for it; that He might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that He might present the Church to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." ¹³ Yet at the same time he can write in condemnatory fashion to the church which is in Corinth deploring its schisms and passing stern judgment on its erring members and he can say to the church in Galatia; "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you?" ¹⁴

When therefore we speak of the Church we are departing both from the spirit and the letter of the New Testament if we think merely of local expression or of denomination. The local church is not of necessity in all its members part of the Church of God having neither spot or wrinkle—in other words, organization is not the synonym of inward loyalty to the Head.

If we had asked the apostle the question "Are the churches of the Methodists and the Presbyterians churches in the same sense as the Church of England?" St. Paul would have found the answer very easy, and it would have been an unequivocal "yes," and it is gratuitous to assume that an extended reply from the apostle would have been wholly in favour of the Anglican. They all are churches but none may lay claim to being The Church for the constitutive fact for membership therein is allegiance to the Head, which prerogative is tied to no denomination.

That leads us on naturally to the subject of church organisation and we shall find little if anything specific on that subject in the New Testament, for the interest of the writers lies elsewhere. Hugh Martin quotes the saying of Dr. Carnegie Simpson about his book "The Evangelical Church Catholic" where he says he is concerned "with spiritual biology, not ecclesiastical anatomy." The same might be said of the New Testament writers. Organisation there must be, and must always have been, but it is the *expression* of the life of the Church and not the creator of it. It is significant that it is Ignatius who first uses the term "Catholic Church." We all know he insisted upon episcopacy to an almost fanatical extent, yet when he writes to the Smyrnans and first uses the word "Catholic" he does not say "where-ever the bishop is," but "where-ever Jesus Christ is, there is the Catholic Church." The Augsburg Confession of 1540 would seem to be in the nature of commentary both on what Ignatius said and on what he might have been expected to say when it declares;

“ The Church *has* an organisation, but it is the congregation of those who believe and obey Christ. ”

The Church is therefore a divine creation. It is ‘ given ’ for its highest title is the Body of Christ. It is not made by likeminded men coming together to create a convenient organisation for the furtherance of common interests or denominational predilections, though we might add that such is very often the popular conception of the folk outside the Church—a conception for which we must ourselves bear much of the blame. In “ The Church and its function in Society ” Dr. Visser ‘ t Hooft quotes a definition of the Church which he says was once offered in the House of Commons ; “ A voluntary association for providing religious services on Sunday for that section of the population which chooses to take advantage of them. ” Against that we say with the New Testament that God’s love creates the Church and brings it into being, yet there is a Church only when men and women respond to the call of God in faith and obedience. Only when Peter says “ Thou art the Christ, ” can the Lord say “ Upon this rock I will build My Church. ” It is the acknowledgment of the Lordship of Christ with all that it implies that is constitutive of the Church.

Now if that is so, we have the right to expect within the pages of the New Testament some genesis at least of organisation, if any particular conception is of the *esse* of the Church—but we find none. To be sure, it is claimed by some that our own threefold ministry of bishops, priests, and deacons existed in the mind of Christ, but the onus is on the shoulders of the sponsors of such an idea to show their evidence, for it is surely a wondrous combination of wishful thinking and of reading history backwards. In an essay of this dimension it is not possible to give the matter of organisation the attention it deserves, but at least it can be said that the dictum of Dr. Hort has never been refuted on any adequate grounds. He says categorically ; “ There is no trace in Scripture of a formal commission of government from Christ Himself. ”¹⁵ This downright statement has been very vaguely criticised as one of “ those subtle super-refinements which occasionally detract from the value of Dr. Hort’s work ” but support in the shape of evidence for the criticism is lacking. Some support is sometimes claimed on the basis of the isolated text “ that ye may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel ”¹⁶ together with its Matthean parallel, but in the words of Dr. Newton Flew ; “ as it stands it does not convey a formal commission of authority for government. ”¹⁷ He adds a footnote concerning the criticism directed to Dr. Headlam for neglecting this saying in his Bampton Lectures on “ The Doctrine of the Church and Christian Reunion ” and notes the bishop’s reply ; “ On the one side I pointed out that in no case is authority given specifically to the Apostles or to the Twelve as such—it is given to the disciples ; on the other hand that warnings are given specifically to the Twelve against the assumption of anything in the nature of authority. ”

That, of course, is plain from the pages of the Gospels and there is nothing in other New Testament writings to show that any such authority was taken to themselves by the Twelve. Thus Dr. Flew

says; "They made no attempt, so far as our knowledge goes, to 'exercise lordship' over the community. But they certainly exercised 'an ill-defined but lofty authority in matters of administration and government' and this was directly due to the moral authority with which they were clothed by the commission given to them by Christ to be His witnesses. It is only in the Church in Judæa that we have clear evidence of their leadership in administration. How far was the authority of the Twelve acknowledged in the communities beyond? . . . What would have happened if the Jerusalem leaders had refused to recognise Paul?"¹⁸ "The answer can scarcely be in doubt, he who had received from God Himself both his Gospel and his commission to preach it was not likely now to disobey God at the dictates of man. . . . Fortunately the "authorities" dealt more wisely with Paul than their successors dealt with Luther and Wesley"¹⁹

Now if there is no trace of commission of government and organisation committed to the Twelve where else can we reasonably expect to find it? The truth is surely that we cannot find it at all. The society of faithful men which Jesus founded did in fact grow and develop into the Christian Church but He left it to organise itself, and history plainly shows that its forms of organisation have varied greatly, and did in fact so vary not only in different places in the days of the Early Church but also in the same place from time to time. Bishop Headlam points out that if the Lord had definitely ordered the shape of the Church it "would have become stereotyped, and, as society became different, the world would have been under the rule of a dead hand. But there is no dead hand in the Christian Church, there is only a living Christ."

Organisation there must be, and must always have been, but the crux must be found where the first Christians found it—in the Living Christ. The report on Doctrine in the Church of England says in this connection; "Some such forms are essential for the perpetuation of the Christian society in the process of history, though at the same time no one particular system of such forms is to be taken as being of necessity constitutive of the fundamental idea of the Church. That idea . . . hinges essentially upon the unity of mankind as redeemed in Christ, and as in Him finding fellowship with the Father and thereby also with one another."²⁰ That has the obvious sanction of the New Testament for the lists of offices given by St. Paul indicate some kind of permanent ministry and organisation, but we notice that the stress is laid on the giver of the offices rather than on the offices themselves. So we read; "And God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues,"²¹ and again; "And He gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ."²² The highly significant thing is that both these lists are mentioned in the closest possible conjunction with the Holy Spirit, and further, that the offices are defined by their functions. The manifestation of the Spirit shown by a man in any of the ways indicated made him a prophet or a teacher, etc.; it was not the conferring of the *Office* upon him that made

him capable of the *Function*; the order is the Spirit, the man, the office, rather than the office, the man, the Spirit. We cannot find any basis of a quasi-material transmission of the gifts from any organisation or its representatives, since those gifts in the very nature of things flow only from the Spirit Himself. Consequently the basic fact is the Spirit's choice of a man, which view is endorsed by the Ordinal of the Church of England when the first question it asks of the deacon is ; " Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you this office and ministration, to serve God, for the promoting of His glory, and the edifying of His people ? " while the first question addressed to the priest is similar ; " Do you think in your heart, that you be truly called, according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Order of this Church of England, to the Order and Ministry of Priesthood ? "

The call of the Spirit is primary above all, and as it was so powerfully felt in the earliest days of the Church, and manifested itself in so many different ways, we are guilty of the most abominable spiritual pride if we refuse to recognise as the fruit of the Spirit *now*, those ministries in the days of the Early Church which today would be called Presbyterian, Congregational, Independent, etc. Space forbids the development of the various ways in which the Church in different parts did in fact organise itself, and the reader must be referred to the whole substance of Dr. Streeter's " The Primitive Church, " a book the argument of which seems never to have been adequately refuted, and to take this general quotation from it ; " For four hundred years theologians of rival churches have armed themselves to battle on the question of the Primitive Church. However great their reverence for scientific truth and historic fact, they have at least *hoped* that the result of their investigations would be to vindicate Apostolic authority for the type of Church Order to which they were themselves attached. The Episcopalian has sought to find episcopacy, the Presbyterian presbyterianism, and the Independent a system of independency, to be the form of Church government in New Testament times. But while each party to the dispute has been able to make out a case for his own view, he has never succeeded in demolishing the case of his opponent. The explanation of this deadlock, I have come to believe, is quite simple. It is the uncriticised assumption, made by all parties to the controversy, that in the first century there existed a single type of Church Order. Approach the evidence without making that assumption and two conclusions come into sight : (1) In the New Testament itself there can be traced an evolution in Church Order, comparable to the development in theological reflection detected by the scholarship of the last century.

(2) The most natural interpretation of the other evidence is that, at the end of the first century A.D. there existed, in different provinces of the Roman Empire, different systems of Church government. Among these, the Episcopalian, the Presbyterian, and the Independent can each discover the prototype of the system to which he himself adheres." ²³

As we know, by the middle of the second century episcopacy seemed to have been in general use throughout Christendom, and the evidence suggests that it was thus arrived at as being the most convenient

method of Church Government calculated to give united testimony to the Faith, as a bulwark against the inroads of heresy and error, and to witness to the assured continuity of the Faith. It was thus called into being by circumstances and emergencies, it never was of the 'esse' of the Church, but it became the means of the 'bene esse.' It emerged as a satisfactory and workable method in the face of schism from within and persecution from without the Church, and it found its personnel not from the apostles by localisation but from the presbyterate by elevation. The bishop thus became (and still is), not an apostle writ small but a presbyter writ large. It is interesting to note that the most fanatical reverence for the episcopacy comes not so much from the accredited Fathers of the Church as from the heretical writings which abounded in the sub-apostolic period not less than they do now, and particularly in the Clementine Romances, where among other things St. Peter, as he moves from place to place, ordains bishops everywhere as though this were the crowning act of his missionary labours, but if we are forced to find our history and our roots therein we are in sorry plight indeed.

The whole question of Church and Ministry with its attendant themes of Order and Validity are burning topics today, and have been thrust before our minds with an insistence which cannot be ignored by events in South India and the amazing variety of opinion which the proposed scheme of Union has evoked. Yet it will have an effect far beyond the confines of India, and is the beginning of an expression of deeply-felt tragedy by countless Christian people, at the disunity and weakness by lack of cohesion which so hampers the work and witness of all who own the Lordship of Christ. The purpose of this article is to attempt in some measure to distinguish between the essence of the Holy Catholic Church and what have well been called its 'glosses.' The essential questions at stake are ; do we equate Faith with Order? Are we to make organisation synonymous with inspiration? Are we to dictate to the Holy Spirit the terms on which we will accept His pleading to be allowed to make us at one?

The following words were written in another context but they are equally relevant here ; " We have the promise that the Holy Spirit will lead us to all truth. But if we never come to grips with any issue, because we never dare to risk mistakes in action, we reveal nothing save lack of faith in Him who made that promise. We are to act in fulness of love, not of knowledge. We shall never have full knowledge of anything under the sun. We know in part, and we therefore act by faith. We can bind together the living present and the living past, but we cannot bind the future. It seems from our present hesitancy that we would bind that, too, before we declare ourselves. Must we have a guarantee from God that our present institutions and ecclesiastical systems suffer no drastic change, before we create any new situation by action? "24

Is it not plain that the crying need of the whole Church today is not to imitate the forms of the Primitive Church, but by the grace of God to capture its spirit? Order there must be, but what is order without the Spirit?—and where the Spirit is, and there alone, is liberty. The Lord prayed that His Church might be one ; so long as we are not one, we are not merely improvident but sinful ; we are not merely un-

economic in our manpower but are striving against the Spirit. There is great need to pray that God Himself in all His power will so guide those in authority in His Body which is the Church and all the members of that Body, that in these days which are fateful indeed for all who own the Lordship of Christ, we may be in unity in matters of necessity, at liberty in things uncommanded by the Lord, and in love and charity in all things.

¹ Exodus xix. 5, 6.

² Philippians : *The Christian Ministry* ; pp. 180, 181.

³ I Kings xix. 18 (R.V.)

⁴ Jer. xxxi. 31-34.

⁵ Matt. xvi. 13-18 (R.V.)

⁶ I Pet. ii. 5-7 (R.V.)

⁷ B. H. Streeter : *The Primitive Church*, p. 47.

⁸ *op cit.* p. 48.

⁹ Acts ii. 47.

¹⁰ *ibid.* ii. 46.

¹¹ *ibid.* xx. 28.

¹² H. Martin : *Christian Reunion*, p. 60.

¹³ Eph. v. 25-27 (R.V.)

¹⁴ Gal. iii. 1.

¹⁵ Dr. Hort : *The Christian Ecclesia*, p. 84.

¹⁶ Luke xxii. 30.

¹⁷ R. Newton Flew : *Jesus and His Church*, p. 120.

¹⁸ *op cit.* p. 190.

¹⁹ G. S. Duncan : Galatians, p. 54.

²⁰ *Report on Doctrine in the Church of England*, p. 106.

²¹ I Cor. xii. 28 (R.V.)

²² Eph. iv. 11, 12 (R.V.)

²³ *op cit.* intro. pp. viii, ix.

²⁴ J. McCulloch : *The Faith that must Offend*, p. 132.

Book Reviews

THE UNITY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

By Archibald M. Hunter, B.D., Ph.D., D.Phil. Student Christian Movement Press. 5/-.

It is interesting, and it is encouraging, to see in a book like this the reaction from what has too generously been termed "Liberal" theology and criticism. The reaction is not complete: this very book opens with two ominous indications of that; for within its first two pages we are told that there are "at least a dozen" contributors to the New Testament, and "John" is pointedly enclosed within inverted commas. But there can be no question about Professor Hunter's vindication of Christian doctrine in highly important respects; and his insistence upon the dangers of the analytical method in study of the New Testament, and on the importance of recognizing its essential unity, is more welcome. The method of "the scholars," he says, has been largely centrifugal hitherto; now it is becoming more and more centripetal. Except for its unfortunate tacit assumption that the former tendency applied to all "scholars", this is a statement for which we may be thankful.

It is certainly true of his own book. The unity of outlook and teaching which he sets himself to prove is abundantly manifested, in terms which, speaking generally, must commend themselves to the most conservative of New Testament students. The subject is clearly and logically divided under three main headings—Christology, ecclesiology, and soteriology: one Lord, one Church, one Salvation. Under each of these, two chapters examine the substance of New Testament teaching; first on the "Kerygma" and "Kyrios Jesus"; secondly on "Jesus and the Church" and "the Apostles and the Church"; thirdly on "Sin and Salvation" and "the Atonement." Not quite all the New Testament books are included in the examination; but presumably, Dr. Hunter does not mean to imply that those omitted would wreck his main contention, and he himself says that "no claim is made that all the evidence has been collected." The books included for detailed examination are the Synoptic Gospels; Acts; the Pauline Epistles except (regrettably) the Pastorals; First Peter; Hebrews; and the Gospel and First Epistle of St. John.

The reaction, especially in doctrine, and (as was said above) speaking generally, is very clear. It is markedly seen in what is said regarding sin and salvation, the Atonement, and the "Kerygma". It is pointed out, for example, that each of the chief New Testament writers, when he comes to speak of the Cross, "employs the language of Isaiah liii". A section on the true preaching of the Cross is admirable. An incidental remark on the Old Testament is highly suggestive—"For, *pace* Marcion and all his successors who would like a religion of *one* Testament, it is the same God Who speaks in both the Old and the New Testaments." The section on the Church leads up to two practical reflections: that the New Testament knows nothing of unattached Christians, and that disunion is clearly contrary to God's will—a point very topical at the moment.

To take a balanced view of the book, however, it is necessary to note that it betrays evidences that the taint of the "Fall" from the established Christian outlook on the Scriptures is not easily removed. We find, for example, the assumption that Matthew, Luke, and John have in places varied, or "shaped" the words of our Lord; and the confident assertion that the Pastorals are "non-Pauline in their extant form"; while the extraordinary theory is upheld that the earliest preachers' representation of the Second Advent is changed in the eschatology of St. John. In view of certain well-known passages in the Gospel and the First Epistle, this too familiar contention provides one of the clearest instances of the employment of what Dr. Hunter himself calls, in a telling phrase, "dead seas of critical ink".

This leads us to the remark that the Second Advent, which is one of the most obvious examples of unity in New Testament teaching, does not occupy in this volume the place to which it is entitled. In view of the especially numerous references to the subject throughout the New Testament, the author's allusions to it are by no means proportionate to its importance, especially considering the express purpose of his book.

One other matter for criticism arises the more unexpectedly, both because of the author's general attitude to Christian doctrine and because of its particular setting. Following a pointed warning that many professing Christians do not yield to Christ the place He held in the faith of the New Testament writers, to whom He was not merely Leader but Lord, it is surprising to find it suggested that it may not always be wise to insist at first on full confession that "Christ is God", and that "men must creep before they walk." Whatever exceptional cases Dr. Hunter may have in view, and granting that the presentation of Christ as Saviour and "Hiding-place" is the primary appeal, this matter is at all events worded in too general terms. Half-way houses are perilous abodes in matters of saving faith.

W.S.H.

THE SCHOOL OF PRAYER

By Olive Wyon. S.C.M. 6/-.

This book is by a lady who has studied theology at King's College, London, as well as in Edinburgh and at Selby Oak. She did preparatory work on the literary side for the Conference on "Church, Community and State," at Oxford in 1937. She is on the Council of Friends of Reunion and is now doing pastoral work among students in Cambridge. She has translated several important works by continental theologians, including three by Brunner, *A Scholar's Testament* by A. Harnack, and *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches* by Troeltsch. A year or two ago she gave us *Radiant Freedom* which was the story of a woman who did a great deal for Poland, and most people who read missionary books will recall her fascinating study of the changing conditions among women in Africa and the East—*The Dawn Wind*.

Miss Wyon's mastery of languages is evident in her preface. She writes: "The extracts from the works of Père de Caussade have been translated by myself; I have not consulted the English translation. The quotations from Tersteegen have been translated from a modern book of selections, probably unobtainable in this country." The last sentence is suggestive. There is much, very much, about prayer that ordinary readers will not be able to find elsewhere for themselves, but they will find it here. Is it then a very "highbrow" book? No! After a beautiful prologue the chapters deal with the nature and object of Prayer; Prayer and the Will of God; Prayer and Life; Fundamental and Practical Hindrances to Prayer; Prayer and the Bible; Prayer and the Spirit of Worship; Other Ways of Praying and Prayer and the Purpose of God.

The quotations are most numerous and reveal a wide knowledge of the subject. They begin, in the foreword, with Luther and end in the last paragraph with John Woolman. In between, the quotations are by no means all from Evangelical Reformers or Quakers. Yet there is no jarring note. Evangelicals will be introduced to some "Catholic" guides, but, Miss Wyon's purpose always seems to be in full harmony with the Evangel though she recognises the great differences in temperament, taste and outlook when she recommends some spiritual books. She says: "To sum up, Spiritual Reading is a kind of daily invitation to look beyond earth to God, and the things of God." We think that describes her own book.

A. W. PARSONS.

DIVINE JUDGMENT IN HUMAN HISTORY

By D. R. Davies. *The Sheldon Press.* 1/6 net.

This is No. 18 of the Christian News-Letter Books, 'designed to assist thought upon the relation of the Christian faith to present problems', under the general Editorship of the Warden of St. Deiniol's Library, Hawarden. It takes a worthy place in a series that no student of our times can afford to neglect. It is composed of the annual York Diocesan Lecture, together with an Appendix, and comes to us with a brief but significant foreword by the Bishop of Hull. From this, two sentences may be quoted: "For the non-Christian, history ever ends in a dead humanity on the Cross. For the Christian life begins there."

Mr. Davies' purpose is clear. He is in the prophetic succession, and is conscious of, and rejoices in, his sense of vocation. 'Prophetic interpretation' he regards as 'the distinctive contribution of the Church to the process of social changes.' The prophet's task is to pierce beneath the confusions of the hour, and to declare the everlasting verities to a fearful and bewildered, perhaps also to a blind and errant, people. He proclaims without hesitation, "Thus saith the Lord". Mr. Davies believes he has a decisive message to give both to the Church and to the

world. That message is not, nor could Mr. Davies expect it to be, beyond the scope of criticism, but the 'burning dialectic' of the spoken word may well, as the Bishop of Hull implies, have produced a deep impression on his hearers, and the written word read in the cool light of reflection, pulses with the sense of urgency and points with no uncertain finger at what the author considers the fatal weakness of our time, and the way of our salvation.

As this writer sees the world situation, the last twenty years have "witnessed the triumph of two opposed systems of thought—Marxism and Neo-Calvinism." He himself, as is well known, claims to be a Neo-Calvinist, though he writes appreciatingly of Marx. He finds them at one in emphasizing the fact round which his book is written, that of Judgment as a process in history, continuous, inevitable, moving towards its final climax. That is the theme of his first chapter. It involves the working out of what Mr. Davies calls unhesitatingly (*pace* Brunner) a Christian philosophy of history. In his view 'man's creative power is inevitably self-destructive. The story of past civilizations, each based on a fatal illusion, shews that "history itself is an impossible experiment." "To perceive in history the futility of all history is the work of the Holy Ghost in the heart." To-day the Western capitalist system is passing the way of all the rest. It has had its rise, and now is passing to its doom. What system will succeed it? Socialism? It too, will as surely fail, and more swiftly than its predecessors, in so far as it fails to overcome 'the basic contradiction of human nature'.

Under the intriguing title of "The Mechanics of Judgment," Mr. Davies proceeds to attempt to shew how this process works, how the principle of self-destructiveness matures and judgment becomes visible to the world, considering this question first from the institutional and then from the personal point of view. Submission to God or perishing is the alternative reached in the first consideration, and in the second the conclusion that "man becomes, in spite of himself, the instrument of God's historic judgment, the unwitting agent of his own destruction."

If it is the Church's responsibility to interpret events prophetically, that message must be proclaimed, and this is the Good News for the world. It means that man, powerless in himself, cannot be reformed or socially improved but only redeemed. Nothing less will meet the fact of the radical corruption of the human will. Barth is criticised as reducing the human agent to passivity, and an analysis of the nature of repentance given that seems in some conflict with Article X. The chapter leads up to insistence on the call to Repentance, which must be the burden of the Christian message to-day.

In an Appendix Mr. Davies describes the rest of the Social Service State—a "new State of Manager-power is clubbing both capitalist and proletariat." The State is absorbing more and more of the functions of home and parent, and the area of personal responsibility accordingly is steadily shrinking. Vast power will be concentrated in limited minorities. The universal problem, which is primarily also the Church's problem, is how in a machine-age to preserve the freedom of the individual, especially as, in the writer's view previously expressed, freedom and security cannot be reconciled. That man, having fought for freedom, and won it, should not know how to use it, and should sell it again for the sake of material abundance is the supreme peril, as it would appear to be a supreme tragedy.

In the course of his argument, there occur several phrases that further reflection might lead the author to modify. Instances are: "God is becoming impatient. The Holy Ghost is in a hurry"; "History (*i.e.*, trying to live in defiance of God's will) is a mug's game." He has a condemnatory or disparaging word for "Catholic" and "Protestant", for the Puritan and the Liberal. "Exeter Halls, Clapham Sects and Nonconformist consciences" (a queer mixture!) are described with singular indifference to dates and most unfairly as "never at a loss for a word to disguise the evils on which they batten and prosper," the "word" being in this case "the iron law of wages." Mr. Davies himself seems to be aware of the criticism that might be made, not only of his analysis of the whole world situation, but also of his reading of current events, when on p. 25 he refers to over-statement and over-simplification.

But the great value of the book remains. It lies in the drawing out of the element of Divine Judgment in all human history and in our own changing civilization, in the awakening of a lost sense of the presence and working of God in human affairs, in the reiterated insistence of the absolute inability of man to save himself, and in the call to repent. That we can leave sounding in our ears, for it is truly the prophetic word of God to our age.

CHRISTIAN COUNTER-ATTACK

By Hugh Martin, and Others. S.C.M. Press. 6/-.

Books and pamphlets telling of resistance movements against the Nazis in the occupied and satellite countries have come into our hands previously, but this present volume differs from those which have preceded it, for it is devoted to the story of the *Christian* counter-attack. The book is in eight parts, together with an index. The Introduction, entitled most aptly "The Broad Picture," is a valuable piece of work, crammed with information. After this chapter, the narrative takes up the story of Church resistance in Germany itself, in the martyred countries, in the Northern lands, in the overrun countries of the West, and then turns to those areas where the Orthodox Churches have taken up the struggle. The next chapter is headed "Germany's Uneasy Allies."

The Introduction states the aim of the book as an attempt "to tell in brief outline the story of what the Churches of Europe have done and suffered and learned in their struggle with Nazism"; and so it is the story of spiritual rather than of political resistance. It is recognised that some observers believe that ultimately the choice in Europe will lie between faith and Nihilism, so the question is asked: "Can we believe in man's destiny if we do not believe in God?" The rest of the book provides a demonstrated answer to that question. Whilst the position is stated frankly, recognising strength and weakness, one fact is clear, "the strength of their resistance must, however, be measured not by armchair criticism, but by the vigour of the Nazi reaction to it." We Protestants need have no doubts about the vigour and spiritual power of our fellow Protestants on the Continent, even in Germany itself. "The Nazis have realised that these Confessional critics were striking at the heart of their system." A remark on the resistance movement in France is most illuminating in its candour and honesty, and it illustrates the approach of the whole book to its subject. "An unfortunate trend in Continental theology which is apt almost to welcome disaster as a call to penitence (forgetting that disaster may be in the first place a call to action), and you have the reason why in the first anxious days the Protestants (of France) had no clear word to speak to their country about the importance of spiritual resistance."

The book ends with an Epilogue, asking some pertinent questions which demand adequate answers. Here is a book to be read and studied. E.H.

THE GREATER VICTORY. BROADCAST ADDRESSES

By Rev. Ronald S. Wright, S.C.F. Longmans, Green and Co. 3/6.

Many years ago your Reviewer attended some lectures given by the late Dean of Gloucester on Sermon Preparation and Delivery. At the end of the series, Dr. Gee gave to each member of the class, a copy of Liddon's sermons with the advice that they should be studied carefully for in his judgment they were the best preaching model for the average clergyman in the Established Church. There can be no doubt about their appeal when they were delivered but when Dr. Gee gave the copies to his theological students they were almost out of date and one wonders what sort of a hearing they would get to-day. In the past fifteen years an entirely new technique of preaching has been discovered which is to be found in most modern Evangelical churches. This book of Addresses by the Radio Padre ably exemplifies this new method of preaching the gospel to the thoughtful seeker of God in action in the world to-day. It contains seventeen talks on such subjects as The Sin that Can't be Forgiven, a Language we can all Understand, On Finding Yourself, Three Groups in a Train, The Blind who See and Youth of To-day. The great Evangelical truths are presented clearly and definitely and one is not surprised to read that Mr. Wright during one week, recently received over 1,000 letters from those who had "listened in". This remarkable response is surely an answer to those pessimistic clergy and laity who are always talking about empty churches and assume that the people generally are "no longer interested in religion". The vicar of a thickly populated town parish well known to the present writer, has an average congregation of forty

people each Sunday and in a recent issue of his parochial leaflet, he bewails the intense indifference of his parishioners to the Gospel message. He makes no secret of the fact that he takes as his model the sermons of the great Evangelical preachers of fifty years ago and this book can be strongly recommended to him and to many others who are conscious of the same sense of failure to grip the people under their pastoral care. The new technique is easily acquired for it consists mainly in relating the petty details of the common round and the daily task to the Author and Giver and Sustainer of Life Everlasting.

J. W. AUGUR.

REDISCOVERING THE LOCAL CHURCH

By Alan T. Dale. S.C.M. Press. 2/6.

It is not always easy to arouse in the average Christian a sense of the Universality of the Church. He may be interested in the local body to which he is attached, but his pulse is not quickened by the adventures of his fellow Christians who live in conditions widely different from his own.

There is also that type of Christian who, because his lot is cast in a country where the Christian tradition is familiar, resigns himself to a dull routine and finds no thrill in the activities of his local church.

This book insists upon Churchmanship, not based upon any mechanical conception of order but upon the fact that the whole church, and each part of it, is a Divine Creation. There is something in each local Church which differentiates it from any other society in the world but which it has in common with every other local Church. Each local Church is a microcosm of the One Holy Catholic Church. Every Christian is a Churchman and has been placed in the Church by God's "mighty act". A very useful set of suggestions for study and discussion with full references is appended. The writer, whose outlook may be described as S.C.M., is a Sheffield Methodist Minister.

PLANNING FOR FREEDOM

By Leyton Richards, M.A. G. Allen and Unwin, Ltd. 2/6.

This book is the Swarthmore Lecture for 1943 and in accordance with the Trust Deed, it is concerned with "some subject related to the message and work of the Society of Friends." Mr. Leyton Richards is well qualified for his task and this book can be strongly commended to all who are engaged in thinking out plans for the establishment of a new and better world after the War. It deals with the following subjects—The Pursuit of Liberty in the Nineteenth Century, the Confusion of Liberty with "Laissez-Faire," The Confusion of Liberty with Nationalism, The Meaning of Liberty under the three headings of Freedom through Obedience, The Freedom of the Christian and Freedom in Community, The Organization of Liberty—Economic and National and The Purpose of Liberty.

The kernel of the book is to be found in the three chapters which deal with Liberty in all its aspects. Mr. Richards rightly condemns the popular illusion about the meaning of liberty—"nothing is more common than to imagine that freedom means, 'doing as we like'"—and drives home his point in an illustration from John Milton's sonnet about those who "bawl for freedom in their senseless mood" and then

... revolt when Truth would set them free ;

Licence they mean when they cry Liberty !

The book is full of similar apt quotations from innumerable standard authors and its careful study will provide many excellent illuminating thoughts for inclusion in sermons on present day problems and discussions on post-war world reconstruction.

J. W. AUGUR.

THE CATHOLIC CONCEPTION OF THE LAW OF NATURE

By Joseph Dalby, B.D. (S.P.C.K. Price 2/6).

"The demand for a Christian ordering of society . . . must . . . mean a demand for an ordering of the life and institutions of the world in accordance with natural law." In these words, the author of this small book of some fifty-four pages expresses his sociological faith, and in order to commend that faith to others, he has traced the development of the idea of the law of nature in the early and the mediaeval Church, after first noting how it took its rise in the thought and philosophy of the Stoics. He has done his work well, and all who cannot read larger works on the subject of *Lex Natura* might with profit read this smaller work.

On its critical as distinct from its historical side, however, this book is very defective. No mention is made, for example, of the criticism passed by the Reformers on the 'catholic', that is, the scholastic conception of the law of nature. Our author points out that "natural law" is that part of "eternal law" which is manifested in human reason, but he fails to note that, as Dr. Niebuhr has pointed out, "this unconditioned claim for an essentially universal reason" is "merely another of the many efforts which men make to find a vantage point of the unconditioned in history." The fact is that the whole Thomist conception of the law of nature implies an impossible fusion of Stoic ontology, Aristotelian teleology and Christian revelation. The conception of a law of nature can be serviceable for sociology, but not in its scholastic form. To seek to go back to that form is to enter a sociological *cul de sac*. E.S.

THE STRUGGLE OF THE SERBS

By K. St. Pavlowitch. *The Standard Art Book Club. Price 5/-.*

There is one good thing this war has done, it has made the Balkan States and their condition better known. A few years ago the countries of Eastern Europe were a closed book to most people, but we hope in the very near future, when peace is restored amongst the nations, that we shall know a great deal more about them.

Great Britain and her Allies will then be called upon to do all in their power to reconstruct the Nations of Europe, and especially these in the Balkans. The Church of England will have a great part to play in the development too.

Having travelled in these areas I can testify to the very great respect the Christians of all Churches have towards the Established Church of England. They were looking to us for leadership before war broke out, and they will expect it from us when peace is declared.

It is up to us, therefore, as far as possible to get to understand these most interesting people who have withstood all the hate and murder of Hitler and his satellites. Serbs, Croates, Slovenes are little more than names to most of us. We are all interested in the Missionary enterprise of the Church, and have helped the Gospel to be taken to the ends of the earth, but we have not sought or given fellowship to our fellow Christians in Eastern Europe. Now is the time for us to enter into real and close union with our brothers and sisters in Christ in these lands.

I would strongly urge everyone to get this book *The Struggle of the Serbs* by K. St. Pavlowitch, in which he outlines something of the history of the Serbian States, their glorious past, and their cultural background. It is full of information that we all should know. The Serbs are a magnificent race, of strong, virile spirit, and have suffered terribly of recent years at the hands of the Nazis, and the Italians and Hungarians.

There are in this nation nearly four million Christians, of whom nearly three million belong to the Greek Orthodox Church, and nearly two hundred thousand are Protestants. The Greek and the Anglican Church could easily be brought nearer to one another. We have much to give them, and I think there is much we can receive from them. It is therefore to be hoped that in some way or other the Christians in Great Britain shall be brought into a closer fellowship with the Christians of Eastern Europe, and this book will awaken interest and create a desire for this fellowship and union.

BIBLICAL POLITICS. STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN SOCIAL DOCTRINE.

By Alexander Miller. *S.C.M. Press. 2/6. 1943*

For a book of this kind this book is good in its emphasis on the indispensability of the theological approach to men's practical problems—because only the Christian Gospel can reveal to man the real nature of his problems. The Christian Gospel provides the diagnosis as well as the remedy; it alters our questions before it answers them. The writer appreciates the significance of the O.T. preparation for the Gospel. We must take the doctrine of the Fall seriously; it is a doctrine of history integral to Christian teaching; history is the history of a sinful race. Justice is "love at a distance." God's Law is the instrument of God's Love. Repentance is indispensable. The Gospel can only help those who sincerely want to be different and to advance heavenward. It is impossible to divide the spiritual from the material. The Incarnation as well as the Fall affirms the significance of this material world. It is here that redemption is to be wrought

out. So the writer lays a deep foundation for his assertion—"it is clear that the Christian man has a very obvious and inescapable political calling."

Mr. Miller then attempts a Christian estimate of the Marxist version of social change. He suggests not only that it is in measure possible to state Christian doctrine in terms of dialectic, but also that only by using such terms can we speak to men whose whole mental make-up is coloured by the influence of Marxist thinking. On the other hand, if Marxism describes the dialectic within history, it knows nothing of that dialectic in which history is only one term. The Christian is not promised victory in this world, but vindication at the last day.

The duty of the State is next discussed and the Christian criteria by which States may be judged. The two extremes of Hildebrandism and of sectism are both alike deviations from the Biblical doctrine. The Christian should show both complete detachment and active participation. He will conform to duly-appointed authority so long as it does its divinely appointed work. This does not pre-judge the issue between pacifist and non-pacifist. Here every Christian man must make his own decision. Every Christian political judgment must be made on the basis of the faith and the facts. It is part of the calling of Christian men so to bear themselves that they will not be found unprepared for any eventuality, however tragic.

Mr. Miller concludes with an outspoken appeal for some drastic practical Christian action in relation to prevailing economic inequalities. The Church cannot expect God to honour its witness until as a community it orders its life in conformity to the Gospel. The failure to surrender economic privilege is the major denial of the Gospel in the Church of our day. Christians should anticipate inevitable social change by putting their own house in order.

NOT BY BREAD ALONE

By Angus Dun. S.C.M. Press. 5/-.

This is a most thoughtful and thought-provoking approach to worship, contemplation, prayer, Bible reading, and Holy Communion. The author is a leader of the American Episcopal Church, and possesses a remarkable power of drawing close and telling analogies between the material things of everyday life and the spiritual facts of human existence. *Not by Bread Alone* is a book to be meditated upon and not one to be read quickly. The opening chapter on worship is first class. Contrast these two sentences and note the author's incisive terms. "We have met rather discouraged and not too convinced church people and ministers who have made us feel that their worship is something we ought to help them support so as not to let them down." That is the false approach. Here is the true: "Worship is the answer called out in man by the self-disclosure of God." Under the title "Looking unto God" Mr. Dun speaks of the contemplative approach to prayer and shows how the initial words of the collects help us to realise God's Presence. Giving God our attention is the next step and the author has some helpful suggestions to lead us towards the Vision of God, and its transforming power. The chapter on "Talking with God" is a powerful plea for verbal prayer, while at the same time a warning against mere forms of words which Mr. Dun calls "magical prayer." "The words of prayer are not a combination that lets us into something nice." "Magical prayer is a crude kind of fake science which hopes to get something by pressing the right button." The author's definitions of the many kinds of "conversational prayer"—Thanksgiving, praise, complaint, confession, petition—are remarkably clear, and the problems involved in faith in objective results from prayer are convincingly tackled.

The section on the Church as "a community of faith" "a community of worship" and "a community of charity," while not offering anything very original does well, in speaking of the church's function and mission, to bring out the exact parallel between her Lord's work and her own. Perhaps the best chapter in the book is that on the Bible as a vehicle of the Real Presence. "That is the Word of God which bears God's thought to us and so shares God's life with us, making Him present. The section on formal prayer might well have formed a separate chapter. It is original and clear but has no real organic connection with the rest. One feels that the author is not quite so sure in his touch when he deals with the Holy Communion, and though himself apparently loyal to evangelical truth in most respects, he dallies with such phrases as "Holy Sacrifice" and "altar" and tries to give them a harmless meaning.

The connection between worship and ordinary life is convincingly dealt with in the short concluding chapter.

Not by Bread Alone is an American production but is remarkably free from "Americanisms," and—being American—its size and format is luxurious by English war-time standards.

H. J. B.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A GERMAN PASTOR.

By *Hans Ehrenberg*. S.C.M. 6/-

Pastor Ehrenberg was born in Altona, of Jewish parents, in 1883. From early youth he was a student and a great reader, particularly of philosophy, in which subject he was first lecturer, and then assistant professor in Heidelberg University. These early studies colour all his thoughts and writings. His frequent references to continental literature, and his philosophical way of looking at things, make his book in places by no means easy reading; but in some ways all the more interesting.

Through the influence of Christian friends the writer was baptised at the age of 26, but confesses that through inadequate instruction, he "failed to be a practising Christian" for a time; but after his marriage to the daughter of some earnest Christians, in 1913, his thoughts steadily turned towards theology, and he was ordained to the Lutheran ministry in 1924, accepting a pastorate at Bochum the following year.

From 1927 on he was in fierce conflict with the Nazi party, neither sparing them nor expecting to be spared. He shared with Pastor Niemöller and others in the struggles which led to the formation of the "Confessional" group of Churches, spent 5 months in a concentration camp, and in May 1939 came to England with his family, being kindly received by the Bishop of Chichester and others.

The author draws frequent contrasts between the outlook of the British and German peoples, and particularly of the churches. He describes the "British attitude" thus: "the religion of tolerance and decency, of Humanism and Civilisation, the preference for a natural theology which can be found in all religions: and Unitarianism, although actually only the creed of some of the intellectually-minded, has become the religion of English public opinion." There is little reference to the definite evangelicalism which is exerting a growing influence on the youth of this country, and this is apparently because the writer's contacts have been chiefly with Christians of the more liberal school. At the same time he agrees with Karl Barth in his opposition to a humanistic view of Christianity, and in placing the "Word of God" in the forefront of his teaching.

Those whose thoughts travel beyond the confines of this country, and beyond the present into the future, will find much to learn from his comparisons between Christianity as seen through British, German and Russian eyes; and will be stirred by his enthusiasm to see Christians from Western, Central and Eastern Europe all taking their share in the task which God is laying upon this generation. The book is not so much a biography as a series of studies by a man who has passed through critical times, and who is at once a very fearless Christian, a capable philosopher, a German and a Jew.

THE COMMON LIFE IN THE BODY OF CHRIST

By *L. S. Thornton*, C.R. Pp. xiii. + 470. Dacre Press. 30/- net.

This is an outstanding book of real importance for every student of the New Testament. So much can be said at once. The Rev. L. S. Thornton has already established his reputation as a Theologian by his previous work, "The Incarnate Lord" now, unfortunately, out of print. He has now added to his reputation by just the kind of work that is needed at the present time. The fact that it is written by one occupying a very different ecclesiastical standpoint from that of the majority of the readers of this Magazine, should not be allowed to prevent a most careful perusal of this really valuable work.

The principal aim of the volume is to make clear what exactly is intended by the word "Church" in the New Testament. Compared with much that has been written on the subject in recent decades it represents a very definite return to the study of the theology of the New Testament which is both encouraging and refreshing. We have had so much critical investigation of the books of the New Testament, with endless discussion of dates and authorship, that the real message and teaching of the books have often been almost ignored. This is not to belittle

the value of this kind of study, but the reaction had gone too far, to the serious impoverishment of the Faith. The kind of work now under review will do much to restore the balance. It is essentially a work of exact scholarship and yet a real devotional atmosphere pervades the book. To the mind of the Author a return to the primitive source of Christian theology is vital for every believer. "From the beginning," he writes, "it has always been true that the Christian way of life and the convictions with which it is bound up are sustained only by a perpetual and ever renewed return to the sources of purification and illumination which are in Christ," and quoting John xv. 7, he continues: "The conditions which are here laid down govern, not only the life of prayer, but also our understanding of the Christian revelation."

The work is divided into two parts. The first is entitled "The Common Life, Human and Divine"; the second, "The Divine-Human Life and the Body of Christ." Thus the conception of the Church as the mystical body of Christ is central to his teaching. In this volume, in contrast with the author's previous one, "attention is concentrated largely upon the Church and, therefore, upon the human aspect of the divine-human organism."

It is obviously impossible to review such a book in any detail. We can only point out some of its salient features and points of special interest. It states the Scriptural and theological basis of the Christian life. Its exegesis is exact to the point of a meticulous accuracy which shows how precise scholarship can minister to the needs of a profound interpretation. A good example is the Author's discussion of Roms. v. 5, or his very careful treatment of the word *homonía* itself on page 158. One of the main items of the book might be stated as the identification of the Christian with Christ through the fellowship of the Church which is Christ's body. In so far as we are members of the Fellowship we are members of Christ and fellow-heirs with Him. "The common life of Christians, concerning which this book is making enquiry, is a life shared by God with man and by man with God. It has its source in God, and He has taken steps to impart it to man" (*cf.* the whole of ch. vi). Hence the importance of that great little phrase of St. Paul "in Christ" of which the Author goes so far as to say, "To be 'in' the risen Christ is the whole of Christianity."

There are many passages of outstanding value to the devout student of the New Testament, particularly the following to which we would like to draw special attention: The Author's discussion of I Cor. xv. 3, 4. (*cf.* p. 278) on p. 257 f. His remarks on the Resurrection on p. 282, on the doctrine of man on p. 310, on Prayer on p. 358; and the really beautiful passage on Christ and the world on p. 365. These will give the casual reader some idea of the excellence of the work and prompt him, we hope, to make a serious study of the whole. And such a task will be a wholesome discipline, for it is impossible to read this work without constant reference to the text of the New Testament. It is, therefore, by no means a book for odd moments.

No doubt on particular points of exegesis and interpretation many will be disposed to make their own individual criticisms. For ourselves we prefer to express gratitude for a really massive work on the New Testament itself which is bound to be of the greatest possible help to preachers and teachers alike.

CLIFFORD J. OFFER

DARWELL STONE: LIFE—LETTERS—PAPERS

By F. L. Cross. Pp. xxiv. + 467. Dacre Press. 30/- net.

A life of Dr. Darwell Stone was to be expected, not because he was a man who rose to great eminence in ecclesiastical affairs or because he was a great or original scholar whose work and writings marked a distinct epoch in the apprehension of revealed truth. But Darwell Stone was of the type who prefers to wield an influence behind the scenes, quietly but effectively. He built up a reputation based not upon originality of thought or brilliance of expression, but upon soundness of judgment and depth of learning. This, and much else, is made clear in the present Biography which is marked by deep sympathy and understanding unspoiled by eulogy or exaggeration.

Certain things stand out clearly in this valuable appraisal of a man who was one of the outstanding personalities of the Anglo-Catholic world of the last generation. Darwell Stone was most conspicuously the retiring scholar deeply versed in patristic lore. He obviously regarded it as one of the main tasks of his life to maintain and preserve the Faith. And to him the Faith was a body of revealed truth embodied in unalterable dogma to be accepted or rejected but in no way to

be modified. It was for him to endeavour to keep the Church in the old paths. He based everything upon precedent and tradition, speculation of any kind appears to have been anathema to him. He was the learned judge, whose function is to interpret and to apply existing laws rather than to originate them; he was not the speculative theologian endeavouring to commend the eternal Gospel to a critical and questioning age. He was deeply learned, but it was learning that was steeped in the past and seemed comparatively indifferent to any such thing as modern theology or modern thought. He certainly believed that the Holy Spirit had guided the Church in her apprehension of the truth, but the range of that guidance seems to have been strictly limited to what he regarded as the true Church. And it is just here that we come to the crux of the whole book. Everything must be based on Catholic teaching, principles and ethics. And by Catholic it seems that, to all intents and purposes, the Roman Church was meant. It is true that most stress is laid upon the teaching of the early undivided Church, but in his search for precedent, he did not stop there. And the truth of this can be seen from the fact that Anglicanism, or such, seemed to make little or no appeal to him. The historic *via media* might almost be a cloak for a betrayal of Catholic truth. The peculiar *ethos* of the Church of England had no attraction for him. Yet if this is true, it is not the whole truth. There was much in contemporary Roman Catholicism that repelled him. He knew the power of its appeal to certain types of mind. As he wrote to one of the host of people who consulted him on a vast range of subjects, "a man to whom the emotional is everything" would almost inevitably be attracted by Rome for, "if one is to be guided by the emotions alone, there is a great deal to be said for Rome." As to his attitude towards the Church of Rome on matters of principle he has much to say that is of value on pp. 57-62.

The general impression of the book, it must be admitted, is of one to whom loyalty to the Church of England or Anglicanism made no appeal. It is easy, therefore to see how some can interpret this peculiar attitude as one of disloyalty: if it was, it was unconscious rather than conscious—the attitude of a mind fixed on great unalterable facts of faith. Yet it is easy to see the dangers of such an attitude especially in the case of lesser minds. If there be no loyalty to one's own Branch of the Catholic Church, there can be no enthusiasm; and when there is no enthusiasm the way is open to much that is undesirable and even hostile. The book, therefore, will only make a direct appeal to a limited number of readers, to those, principally, who share Stone's peculiar attitude of detachment from Anglicanism. To them it will be a veritable mine of information on a vast variety of topics. Stone's considered judgment is here embodied in one hundred communications to correspondents who consulted him on almost every conceivable ecclesiastical subject! In addition, ten papers, more substantial contributions, are also included. Many Anglo-Catholics and perhaps some others, will be grateful for this collection.

Needless to say that, like all products of the Dacre Press, the book is well printed and produced on almost a pre-war scale of excellence.

CLIFFORD J. OFFER.

PREFACE TO BIBLE STUDY

By Alan Richardson. S.C.M. 5/-

This book is not at all like the old books on Bible Study written by such men as Griffith Thomas and Harrington Lees. It is written by a man who obtained a First Class in Philosophy at Liverpool and a First Class in Theology at Oxford. He has been Study Secretary of the S.C.M. since 1938. He is the author of *Credo in the Making*, *The Redemption of Modernism* and *The Gospels in the Making*. He sets out in this book to write about the Bible rather than about biblical criticism. He tells us plainly that "all that follows is written out of the deep conviction that the Bible is the covenanted means of God's self-communication with men, and that because God has appointed it for this purpose it possesses a value which no other work could ever have." He is convinced that "man hears God speaking to him as he kneels with the Bible in his hand." Nevertheless, he holds that "there can be no going back on the positions gained by the discoveries of biblical research. There may be modification here and there, but the broad general conclusions are beyond cavil." However, in the best part of his book on "How to run study groups on the Bible" he says: "There is no need to over-burden the group with a series of facts about, say, Q, or the four document hypothesis, or J. P. E. and D." The leader must be :

"On his guard against thinking that there is any saving value in such knowledge for lay members of groups, who want to know what the Bible says to them in the actual situation in which their life is set." We have to read a number of sermons by deacons who have newly come from College. We wish their teachers were as wise as Canon Richardson in counselling a wise reserve in the pulpit on matters which, we feel, are still under discussion and are by no means "beyond cavil." This book is available for 2/- to those who join the S.C.M. Religious Book Club.

A. W. PARSONS.

TOWARDS BELIEF IN GOD

By Herbert H. Farmer, D.D. S.C.M. Press Ltd. 8/6.

Any book from the pen of Dr. H. H. Farmer is sure of a wide and influential circle of readers. Many who read this quarterly will already know his important little book *Experience of God* published in 1929 and now out of print. Dr. Farmer has wisely decided to rewrite this volume while keeping intact the basic plan of the earlier volume. As the author remarks the treatment is quite different and we have here not only "a new book" but also one which is in many ways an improvement on its predecessor.

With the general line of Professor Farmer's argument older readers will already be familiar. It cannot be better stated than in his own words "There are reasons for belief in God which make such belief as well-grounded as any belief which touches upon ultimate issues can ever be. Yet they are not such as to make some adventure of decision and self-commitment superfluous. On the contrary, they are such that the necessity for such adventure of decision and self-commitment can itself be seen to be an entirely reasonable thing." These reasons are given the classification of the coercive, the pragmatic and the reflective elements in belief in God. With the coercive element Dr. H. H. Farmer has strong affinity with the Evangelical emphasis on experience of God. The pragmatic element brings before us that vindication of faith in God in the practical business of every day living. The reflective element in belief in God occupies more than half the book. It will suffice to indicate the admirable clear-sightedness of his argument by quoting his view as to the mutual relations between these elements. "If the coercive and pragmatic elements in belief in God are not present, philosophical arguments about theism will avail nothing; at the very most they may remove some negative hindrances in some minds. If they are present, such arguments will come in more as a subsidiary help and support than as part of the main structure—a sort of flying buttress, necessary for those whose edifice of belief has within it a certain tension or stress, but unnecessary for those whose edifice of belief has no such tension or stress. It follows from this that the important thing for all of us is that a living sense of God should arise and persist within the soul, through its own inevitable compellingness and its own continuous pragmatic verification. Given that, there is for those who are so disposed some point in travelling further; without it, the rest of the journey is likely to be hardly more than mere academic exercise." In this section of the book on the reflective element in belief in God we are given an admirable account of "The Influence of Bias" and criticisms of the attempts of sociological and psychological theories to vindicate religion without God. This prepares the way for the three concluding chapters on "Positive Reflective Confirmations of Belief in God," "Science and Freedom," and "The Problem of Evil."

While this is a book we can unreservedly commend and no one will rise from its perusal without being fortified in "the inner man," we are rather troubled to think that in his desire for fair dealing Dr. Farmer is inclined to give too much away. The assertion "God's Existence Indemonstrable" needs qualification if only in the light of the great and influential modern school of neo-scholasticism. We could also wish that another phrase was found than "pragmatic element". It is a word that has associations with an American school of philosophy that has found few adherents in this country. An Appendix with some guidance on the bibliography of a vast subject would have added to the practical usefulness of a volume that should find its way to every parsonic bookshelf for reading and passing on. It would help many a cleric to speak to the condition alike of youth groups as well as to thoughtful adults. It is ideal pabulum for the general reader on a difficult subject.

A.B.L.