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A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

BOOKS AND THEIR WRITERS.

THERE is an aspect of the Reformation which has not perhaps received as much attention as it deserves. We think of the movement most frequently as a great spiritual awakening, as the throwing down of an ecclesiastical tyranny and the return to purity of doctrine. We are inclined to forget that the medieval Church had deep roots in the organization of society through its wide possessions and through the positions of temporal power held by its Bishops, and the wide acres under the control of great monastic establishments. Oscar Albert Marti, Ph.D., Professor of History in the Central Missouri State Teachers' College, has done a useful service in writing a scholarly examination of the *Economic Causes of the Reformation in England* (Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 10s. 6d. net). He shows the process by which ecclesiastical endowment developed, and the extent and ramifications of ecclesiastical wealth. "The Church was a great business as well as a religious corporation, its interests touched the whole economic life of the people, and its power was felt at every turn." The protests against papal finance in the thirteenth century were frequent, and the revolt against ecclesiastical exactions developed increasing strength till they reached their climax in the sixteenth century. There were many factors that led to the secularization of Church property at the Reformation. Dr. Marti follows out these movements with a wealth of illustrative detail. There were no doubt abuses when so great a social upheaval occurred, but the new régime proved itself more conducive to the welfare of the people than the old. The pictures which have been drawn by biassed historians of the beauty of life when the monasteries were great landowners and were supposed to be the benevolent patrons of the people and of the poor represent only half the truth. Dr. Marti presents the facts of the economic situation and the inevitable clash which had to come between the old system and the new life bursting through the ecclesiastical bondage. This is a valuable study of many important features in the movements which led to the English Reformation.

The Rev. R. Mercer Wilson, M.A., Lecturer on Church History, Wycliffe College, Toronto, has published a series of lectures delivered before the Alumni Association of the College under the title *Before the Reformation* (Chas. J. Thynne & Jarvis, 2s. net). It is well known that numbers of writers have set themselves to represent the ages before the Reformation as the period when our country could be described as "Merrie England." They draw highly-coloured pictures of the happy condition of the country. They endeavour to ascribe to the Church of that period the development and maintenance of this condition which they produce out of their own imagination. Dr. Coulton has, however, presented the true state of affairs in a number of important historical surveys of the medieval ages. It is not possible for everyone to read through his

numerous and detailed volumes. Mr. Mercer has in brief form given some of the chief points of the results of Dr. Coulton's studies in these handy and popular lectures, and helps to correct the mis-statements of the "medieval romanticists." He deals with the conditions produced by feudalism, and goes on to show the monk of the Middle Ages as Squire, with the hard lot of the poor which brought half the population into servitude. The widespread ignorance was unrelieved by the Religious system, and with knowledge came emancipation, and liberty was the result of the Reformation. These pictures of medieval life are clearly drawn and serve the useful purpose of correcting misrepresentations largely circulated for the purposes of propaganda. The lectures close appropriately with the statement of Dr. Coulton, "Every day more clearly the modern world sees God where the Middle Ages only shuddered at a black and hopeless void."

A Memoir of G. H. S. Walpole, Bishop of Edinburgh, by W. J. Margetson, Provost of St. Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh (Wells Gardner, Darton & Co., 3s. 6d. net), presents a charming picture of a saintly life. The boyhood of the future Bishop was not a happy one. His father had been an officer in the army and resigned his commission to take orders. He carried the army spirit into his parish and his home. He was described by a contemporary as "an 'ultra-ritualist' who offered the people an advanced ritual and teaching that they had to accept whether they liked it or not. It was the same in the home. He ruled sternly. The boy was delicate, but for him, as for his three brothers, the hard rule could know no mitigation. The one ray of light was a mother's love, poured out lavishly on her delicate boy." He went to Trinity College, Cambridge, and in spite of the opposition of his father, who wished him to enter the army, he followed the vocation which he strongly felt and took orders. He had a varied ministerial experience. He began in a curacy at Truro in 1877, and in 1882 went to New Zealand as incumbent of St. Mary's Church, Auckland. In 1889 he was appointed a Professor in the General Theological Seminary in New York. In the year 1896 he returned to England as Principal of St. Bede's College for the training of elementary schoolmasters at Durham. After seven years' work there he accepted the living of Lambeth from the Archbishop of Canterbury, and in 1910 he was consecrated Bishop of Edinburgh in succession to Dr. Dowden, the great liturgical scholar. He was an indefatigable worker in every sphere, but his special gifts were those of a missionary, and he was never happier than when conducting retreats or missions. His devotional books are well known and are appreciated by all sections of churchpeople for their depth of spirituality, although the teaching of some of them is not that of the Evangelical School. His son, Mr. Hugh Walpole, the well-known novelist, contributes to the volume two chapters of reminiscences of his father and his mother, which give a delightful impression of their characters and add considerably to the interest of the memoir.

Many beside those who knew the Bishop will be glad to have this record of a life of service to the Church and of devotion to its Master.

A little book by Canon J. B. Lancelot, of St. James, Birkdale, *The Religion of the Collects*, Brief Meditations (S.P.C.K., 2s. 6d.), provides the type of devotional study which many find most helpful. A page of thoughtful meditation on each collect in the Christian year gives a keynote. Original in thought and full of spiritual experiences these meditations will be found a help and inspiration. It is a booklet which may well find a place on the bedside table for the early morning devotional study. As examples, the following passage from the meditation on the collect for Quinquagesima Sunday will give an idea of their point and richness, "In a man real worth means richness and clarity of mind, honesty of conviction, generosity of character, and true nobility of doing has love for its supreme motive;" and this on the Whit-Sunday Collect: "The Spirit on Pentecost was shed abroad. All are, or may be, within the range of His operations. We are not all called to the Ministry of the Word, or of teaching or of healing, but we all have our Christian Service to render as well as our lives to manage, and may not a right judgment save us from mistakes which not only lead to much private unhappiness, but actually often hinder the cause of God?"

Those who have read Miss Constance Padwick's most interesting biography of Canon W. H. Temple Gairdner, of Cairo, will be glad to have the further insight into the charming character of that great missionary which is given in the collection of his letters and informal writings published under the title *W. H. T. G. to His Friends* (S.P.C.K., 5s. net). His interests were varied. They included Music, Travel, Works of Art, and the Beauties of Nature, and on all of them he writes with peculiar charm. The most revealing portion of the volume is probably his letters to his children, which show the ideal relationship between a parent and his family. There are also two interesting essays, one "On the Writings of H. G. Wells," and the other "On Elgar's Second Symphony." The following comment on the New Prayer Book reveals a desire shared by many: "Talk of alternative Prayer Books! The alternative book we really need is one in modern speech that you could use with children and illiterates and stand a chance of being understood. I baptized a boy of ten yesterday, and had written out for him into modern English the Questions and Answers, and the Words of Reception. I felt it made a stupendous difference—the difference between dignified ceremony and soul-transaction."

The latest numbers of *The Study Bible* issued by Messrs. Cassell & Co. (3s. 6d. net each volume) maintain the high standard and special features of this interesting series. In the volume on the General Epistles the Rev. A. J. Gossip, D.D., writes the general introduction on *The Religious Message of the General Epistles* for

the Present Day, and the Rev. J. F. McFadyen the Critical Study. The Archbishop of Armagh contributes the general introduction to the volume on the Book of Revelation, Dr. Arthur S. Peake an essay on Principles of Interpretation. The extracts on the various passages are drawn from a wide range of ancient and modern authors, and are full of helpful suggestions, and aids to the understanding of the books.

The Life of Love, by Prebendary H. W. Hinde, M.A. (Religious Tract Society, paper 9d.), is a small book with a great theme. Into a short space its author has packed a harvest of thought garnered from a rich experience and close study of the mind of Christ and of St. Paul. The first chapter explains the Motive of the Life as shown in St. Paul's experience, "The love of Christ constraineth." The three following chapters deal with the Measure—in Self-negation, in Spirit enduement and in World Service. The next chapter, "The Manifestation," shows the significance of the supreme example in St. John xiii. The final chapter is on "the Mainspring—the love of God" which appeals to us to lead the Life of Love, loving God and loving others, and in loving service to glorify Him. The heart of Christianity is revealed in these thought-provoking chapters.

"Many of the clergy to-day, whether to their liking or otherwise, have much leisure time, and it is a pity that educated men do not occupy this more profitably than is sometimes the case." With this rebuke Mr. H. M. Barron, B.A., Wadham College, Oxford, opens a book entitled *Your Parish History*: How to discover and write it (Wells Gardner, Darton & Co., Ltd., 3s. 6d. net), in which he advises the parsons to provide "an ever-increasing interest and recreation for themselves" by writing the history of their parishes. For those who might say that they did not know how or where to begin, he supplies the necessary information, and gives advice as to the various sources of the history and how they are to be reached. Printed books by previous writers are for the most part to be avoided as they perpetuate mistakes. Every statement must be verified, and if possible the original source discovered and examined. The student is advised as to the best way to use the Record office in Chancery Lane, the Wills office in Somerset House, the Manuscript Room at the British Museum, and the offices of the Society of Genealogists in Bloomsbury Square. He is told of the chief authorities, the Ancient Chronicles, the State Papers, the records of Domesday Book, the Rolls, the lists of Taxpayers, Itineraries, Manorial histories, Monastic Registers, and Parish Registers and Papers. This guide to the source of history will prove a help to those who are contemplating the production of a parochial history, and it may also prove a source of inspiration to those who have not as yet felt able to undertake the historian's task for want of the necessary equipment.