

Reviews.

The Forward Books, (The Independent Press, 2s. each).

(1) *The Living God*, by John Marsh; (2) *Congregationalism and the Church Catholic*, by Nathaniel Micklem; (3) *The Open Bible*, by R. K. Orchard; (4) *The Ministry*, by John Huxtable.

The issue of this new series by the Independent Press shows a concern and a courage. The concern is due to the state of the churches affiliated with the Congregational Union. Dr. Micklem says that if the Moderators were "to speak candidly and freely about the state of the Congregational churches to-day", they would "paint a picture not to be viewed without consternation". He says further, "We have fallen from the Gospel. That is the primary source of our weakness. Its secondary source is that we have fallen from our principles of churchmanship . . . and further, there is a radical malaise in our denominational life. The root of our trouble, very simply put, is this: we have asserted the independence of the local congregation as the sole Congregational principle; therefore, we have missed and overlooked a vital part of our religious inheritance, and having no religious or theological principle to guide our denominational development in the relation of churches to each other, we have been thrown back upon mere expediency." That is a very serious statement, though Dr. Micklem modifies it by saying that he brings no general charge. The situation, says Dr. Micklem, can only be saved "through penitence, and penitence through a painful frankness."

So this series is being issued. In addition to those mentioned above, others are being prepared on *The Nonconformist Conscience*, *The Holy Spirit*, *Church Meeting and Democracy*, while others still are being planned on *Worship and the Sacraments*, *The Reformation*, *Christianity and Science*, *The Life of Prayer*, etc. It will be seen that, eventually, much ground will be covered, and, if those to be published are up to the level of these already in our hands, a great service will have been rendered to the Congregational Churches, and beyond them.

The Rev. John Marsh of Mansfield College, Oxford, is the General Editor, and, in the introduction to the first in the series, *The Living God*, he says that the intention is "to make clear the wealth of their inheritance to the churches we love and serve, and to indicate its significance for the present day." He also says, "We have written tracts, not treatises." And they must be accepted as such. For the notes of a tract are that it is written by a convinced person, that it is written in order to persuade, and

that it is written for the times. Mr. Marsh continues, "The 'New Order' will extinguish us unless we become properly centralized, yet unless our centralization is spiritual in its foundations and in its authority, as our fathers pleaded, we may continue to exist, but not as a true church."

All this has value and meaning for us Baptists also. From our standpoint some of the statements need modifying, others need controverting, and there are serious omissions. We would probably refer oftener to the redeemed community or regenerated church membership. Our ministers could not claim that they were "unchecked by any traditional liturgy," and while it is true that we also are "committed to no explicit articles of faith" our distinctive ordinance serves, not only as a check, but also as a declaration of those things which in our hearts we do not doubt.

In these days many of our Baptist ministers are troubled. They are not clear as to what is the relationship between the local church and the Church Catholic. Neither are they clear as to the place of the ministry except that they are certain it is an order within the Church, and not over the Church. There is a dearth of literature amongst us. We need someone to do for us what John Owen did in his day, and what Joseph Angus did in his generation, and likewise Dale still later.

Meanwhile, here are books that will enlighten and fortify and stir us all; and we are thankful to the writers and to the Independent Press.

B. GREY GRIFFITH.

Bunyan Calling. A Voice from the Seventeenth Century, by M. P. Willcocks. (George Allen and Unwin, 236 pp. 12s. 6d.).

This is a provoking book—provoking in two senses. It is often erratic and inconsequential in style. There are in it a number of signs of carelessness. It is fundamentally marred by the writer's lack of understanding of Bunyan's religion. Yet when all this has been said, there is much in it that is fresh and stimulating, and one realises how vigorously and effectively the man himself, and his career, might be made to speak to our own day. The book is sufficiently modern in style and language to include the word "quisling" in its account of the siege of Mansoul by Diabolus (p. 225).

Miss Willcocks is a practised novelist and essayist who has already written studies of Mary, Queen of Scots, and Madame Roland, of French Revolutionary fame. She has clearly read Bunyan's writings extensively, and the bibliography at the end of this new work shows that she has had before her the right sources for a study of Bunyan, though it seems likely that they

have been used in rather haphazard fashion. (It is surely unusual and undesirable, even in a brief list of books, to put the distinguished authors of *The Village Labourer* down as "Hammonds", particularly when a few lines above we are referred to the work of "Dr. John Brown".)

After an introductory chapter entitled "Storm over England," eight chapters are given to an outline and interpretation of Bunyan's career. Chapter X consists of a re-telling of the strange experience of Agnes Beaumont, based on her own narrative, and the Minute Book of the Bunyan Meeting. Here, as when she is describing Bunyan before Sir Francis Wingate, or Elizabeth Bunyan before the Bedford justices, Miss Willcocks shows considerable narrative and dramatic power. There follow four chapters which summarise successively *The Pilgrim's Progress*, parts 1 and 2 (to the latter, Miss Willcocks is very antipathetic), *The Life and Death of Mr. Badman*, and the *Holy War* (interpreted as a threefold allegory, religious, political and social). Chapter XV deals rather summarily with Bunyan's closing years, and the book ends somewhat abruptly.

Miss Willcocks' strength lies in her descriptive power, and in her attempt to relate Bunyan to the social and economic background of the seventeenth century. When she comes to his deeper and more personal experiences, she either dismisses them or attempts a crude psychologising. A score of passages might be cited. Perhaps the most glaring are those in which the phrases from *Grace Abounding* "a narrow gap, like a little doorway in the wall" and "to sell and part with Christ" are interpreted, the first as "a birth memory of the child's struggle to escape the womb" (p. 66), and the second as a reference to the selling of the Bunyans' land, and the evils of the enclosure system (pp. 71f.). Miss Willcocks' own general position is clearly stated:—"The form of Bunyan's creed troubles us very little to-day; it was a narrow faith, born out of humanity's instinct for self torture. Anyway, as a living force, it is gone" (p. 186). And again: "It is not his creed, which has lost its meaning for us, nor his stand against tyranny, his assertion of the right of the individual to speak as he thinks, which we value most in Bunyan. . . . It is for his large, his generous humanity that we bless him: and above all, that he tried to keep nothing secret from us, not even the feelings which most men hide" (p. 125-6). And again: "Now men's minds turn, not as Bunyan's did, to heaven, but to the world of creative art, where, beyond the roar of planes and guns, and beyond the voices on the air, there is still peace" (p. 76). This may seem to us very superficial and inadequate, but at least there is no false pretence about it. It is indeed the more worthy of note that Miss Willcocks has clearly felt Bunyan's greatness,

and that, in spite of the limitations of her approach to him, she has noticed a number of things which others have missed, and has succeeded in making him live.

The book is better printed and bound than many war-time productions, and there are four excellent illustrations. Among the errors, the following may be noted: "William Gifford" (p. 66), "Jacob" for "Joseph" (p. 209), "Bunyan" for "Badman" (p. 215), the quotation marks in the middle of p. 220 which suggest that Bunyan himself identified Charles II. with Diabolus, and the strange form "Diablonians" for Bunyan's "Diabolonians" throughout chapter XIV. Disappointing as it is in so many respects, this book will do no harm to the reputation of its subject. Though the sound of the voice is somewhat distorted, no reader can be in doubt that a great man is calling to us from the seventeenth century.

ERNEST A. PAYNE.

Studies in History and Religion: Presented to Dr. H. Wheeler Robinson, M.A., on his seventieth birthday. Edited by Ernest A. Payne, Senior Tutor in Regent's Park College, Oxford. (Lutterworth Press, 21s.)

If imitation be the sincerest form of flattery, Mansfield College may indeed feel pleased. Dr. H. Wheeler Robinson's pupils at Rawdon and Regent's Park Colleges have done for him, on his seventieth birthday, what Dr. A. M. Fairbairn's did for him on his; and their editor, in search of a title for their *Festschrift*, has modified the title of one of Dr. Fairbairn's works. War conditions have made the present volume less imposing than *Mansfield College Essays* (1909), but the resemblances are close. Both volumes contain a bibliography of the revered teacher's writings, and a reproduction of his portrait in oils. The portrait of Dr. Robinson by James Gunn is, in many ways, excellent, but it makes him look rather forbidding. It is a pity that the artist did not catch him when a smile was putting a different light into his eyes.

Fourteen essays by as many different writers, on subjects of their own choosing, present a reviewer with a harassing problem. Either he must fasten on one or two, or be content to indicate what each essay is about, adding a few remarks about their general competence. He will almost be expected to say that there is a certain unevenness among so many contributors. It may be said at once that the general standard of competence of the contributors to this volume is high. In one or two essays, however, the style cannot be said to be either interesting or crystal clear. The late Principal Denney used to say that want of style

prevented almost all Scottish theological books from reaching the first rank. Denney, like Dale, drilled himself in Burke, and by constant labour arrived at a style which was the perfection of lucidity. The following sentences by one of the essayists obviously need re-casting: "This acceptance on authority is disguised by the assumption that if I had been in the other man's place then I would have seen what he saw, because I trust him, and so, while superficially I am accepting the authority of another, the knowledge so obtained is as good as if it were the product of my own investigation or experiment" (pp. 174f.). "He may claim that it is no longer a matter of authority, of second-hand beliefs, yet the fact that very similar experiences of conversion do come to men with very diverse authoritarian backgrounds, and the fact that they claim the truth of these diverse beliefs received from those backgrounds to be verified by their experience, clearly shows that the form of the experience, the 'truths' of their revelation, are mainly grounded on authority" (pp. 175f.).

In our judgment (which we notice coincides with that of *The Expository Times*) the most interesting and valuable of the essays is that of Mr. L. H. Marshall. His thesis is that the exponents of *Formgeschichte* have been led into arbitrary and even absurd conclusions by the relentless application of their method. Mr. Marshall writes forcibly and lucidly, and makes his points against the Form-critics in a novel, though common-sense way. The only other essay on a New Testament subject is Mr. L. H. Jenkins' careful and elaborate study of a Marcan doublet. These two essays are a sufficient proof that the complaint that Baptists have no New Testament scholars is often greatly exaggerated.

Four essays are concerned with the Old Testament. Mr. G. Henton Davies maintains that the ideas of the presence of God in Israel provide us with a living approach to Old Testament religion, and one which has hitherto been comparatively neglected. This essay is a good illustration of the present tendency among theologians to regard the Bible, not only as ancient history, but also as an actual revelation. Evidently Mr. Davies has been working on similar lines to Dr. W. J. Phythian-Adams, whose book on this subject, announced by the Cambridge University Press, the reviewer has not yet seen. Mr. L. H. Brockington's essay on the prophetic claim "The Lord shewed me", follows and elaborates the ideas laid down by Dr. Wheeler Robinson in his essay on "Prophetic Symbolism" in *Old Testament Essays* (1927).

Mr. J. N. Schofield shows his independence of his teacher by advancing arguments in support of the "heretical" view of the date of Deuteronomy; and Mr. J. B. Middlebrook writes on "The

Old Testament Pattern of History". Mr. Middlebrook writes well and interestingly. He knows how to make theology readable. He is not afraid to introduce a touch of rhetoric; and the preacher in him leads him to apply what he has to say to the needs of the present time.

Two essays deal with doctrinal problems. Principal R. L. Child writes on a well-worn theme: the relation between grace and freedom in the teaching of the Apostle Paul. His conclusion is that freedom, for Paul, is at one and the same time a moral achievement and the gift of God. It came to us with a slight shock to find, in the discussion of a difficult point in Pauline theology, a quotation from Charles Morgan's latest novel, *The Voyage*. Parisian night-life and the Apostle Paul seem far enough apart; but the quotation is thoroughly apposite. Mr. A. W. Argyle's essay on "The Influence of the Logos Doctrine in Christian Thought" sketches the history of the Logos concept in the Pre-Christian writers, the Fourth Gospel, the Church Fathers, and the Cambridge Platonists; and notes the Barthian reaction against it. This essay reads rather like a series of summaries, and the conclusion, in which the doctrine is evaluated, is all too brief. At one time the Logos doctrine had considerable apologetic value, never better seen than in the Fourth Gospel. On the other hand, it was grounded in a deistic conception of the universe, and entangled Christian doctrine in not a few needless difficulties. To-day we can do most of the work done by the Logos doctrine by using the much simpler conception of divine immanence.

Three essays deal with problems in the Philosophy of Religion. Dr. R. F. Aldwinckle, writing on "The Christian Conception of God", reacts strongly against Barthianism, and develops the thesis that God and man are essentially and spiritually akin. In his essay on "The Problem of Truth in Religion: Prolegomenon to an Indian Christian Theology", Mr. E. L. Wenger, of Serampore College, tackles the epistemological problem, and he, too, has a lance to break with the Barthians. He suggests that Christian thinkers may obtain some help from Indian Logic, which recognises authority as a real source of knowledge. He is careful to say that Christianity cannot embarrass itself with the unyielding monism of Advaitism. The very reservations he is constrained to make compel one to say *timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*. Dr. F. Townley Lord's essay on "Man in the Scheme of Things" deals with a subject which he has made his own, and is written with his usual ease and clarity of style. It is not merely of academic interest, for it elaborates the notion that the Christian conception of man is the doctrinal storm-centre of our time.

Strangely enough, Principal Arthur Dakin is the only

essayist to deal with ethical problems which are now so much to the fore. With characteristic energy he maintains that the Evangelical type of Christian experience should have its characteristic ethic, just as it has its characteristic theology. It should be an ethic of freedom which has nothing to do with codes of obedience. He who has Jesus Christ as the Lord and Master of his life needs no other guide. Dr. Dakin contends that the evangelical interpretation of Christianity offers men the very life-force for which they are groping to-day. He thinks that it has been "the departure from the evangelical stand-point in ethics more than in dogma that has led to the present bewilderment and sense of frustration. Let ethical exhortation in the Church return to this spiritual level and Christian living recapture this evangelical atmosphere, and we may well see defeatism turned into assurance of victory, and depression give place to the campaigning spirit." This challenging essay is sure to be attractive to all evangelicals. Nevertheless, it arouses doubts. The maxim "Love God and do what you like" embodies a truth, but it has its dangers too. After all, the Apostle Paul found it necessary to "mortify" his body. The truth seems to be that both Evangelicals and Catholics have something to learn from each other in this as in other matters, though naturally enough the former will never accept the casuistical systems of the latter.

Mr. A. J. D. Farrer, who was formerly Dr. Robinson's colleague on the tutorial staff of Regent's Park College, provides an excellent essay on "The Mediæval Waldenses and the Early English Baptists". After a careful examination of details, he has no difficulty in showing that the Waldenses, unlike the Early Baptists, were more Catholic than Protestant, even though they were reformers before the reformation.

Mr. E. A. Payne's essay on "The Development of Nonconformist Theological Education in the Nineteenth Century with special reference to Regent's Park College" is a piece of work of the type in which he excels. His essay incorporates a great deal of research into Reports and other sources of information, and his findings are set forth in an attractive fashion. He knows how to make dry bones live, and to bring out the movements of thought underlying happenings which looked insignificant when they occurred.

Studies in History and Religion is not everyman's book. Some laymen, if they read it, may wonder why theologians make the Christian faith so abstruse and, at times, even a little dull. Nevertheless, the volume is a worthy offering to a great and influential teacher, whose work in establishing a Baptist College at Oxford will abide. It reveals, not only the wide range of

Dr. Robinson's own scholarship, but is also an indication of the scholarship which our denomination has at its disposal.

A. C. UNDERWOOD.

Church-Life and Church-Order, by J. Vernon Bartlet.
(Blackwell, 15s.)

This is a volume commemorating the life and work of James Vernon Bartlet, who for so long influenced the students of Mansfield College, Oxford. It is very right that some such volume should appear, for Bartlet was an Oxford figure, a distinguished and well-known Congregationalist, and a scholar whose scholarship was recognised throughout the whole English theological world. A man of distinctive and somewhat eccentric habit, he will long be remembered in Mansfield circles, where his sayings and the stories attaching to him will for long run through the College halls.

It seems very natural, also, that one of his pupils, C. J. Cadoux, should have undertaken the task of editing this memorial volume, and writing the memoir with which it opens. Cadoux himself, now also a tutor at Mansfield, is also a recognised scholar in the same field that Bartlet had made his own. The memoir is well done with all the carefulness we expect from its author, who openly allows the pupil's *pietas* for his loved tutor to appear. All who knew Bartlet will find pleasure in reading it, and from it will catch again glimpses of the well-known figure, and echoes of both his habits of mind and his language.

After the memoir comes the treatise which Bartlet had left behind in a somewhat partial and confused state. Dr. Cadoux has gathered together all the material, and in spite of difficulties, has arranged it well to make a connected narrative. After his manner he has added copious notes, all of value.

The treatise itself on Church-Life and Church-Order in the first four centuries, is a very important contribution to a much debated subject; it can hardly be neglected by anyone working on the theme in the future. As we should anticipate, coming from Bartlet it takes the form of a very careful analysis of the relevant documents with the drawing of such conclusions as the documents warrant. Here, as elsewhere, Bartlet draws his conclusions carefully, not to say cautiously, and few will question their rightness provided there is acceptance of the estimate of the various documents. The discussion of the documents, their nature, date etc., is a valuable contribution to early Church History.

The point of view from which the work is written is that Church-Order is closely connected with Church-Life, that Church-Life is indeed the guiding clue to the Order. Later, Order comes to be cultivated for its own sake till a stereotyped Order existing

in its own right comes in its turn to condition Church-Life. But in the beginning the process was the opposite—the Order springs out of the theology and, the necessities of the situation, which therefore give the clue to its right interpretation.

This is an exceedingly valuable idea, and it raises the abiding problem connected with Church-Order. Is the life prior or the Order? Is Church-Order something which must remain always fixed, or can it, and ought it, to change with changing conditions? Is there one Church-Order rooted in Christian theology which must abide so long as the theology is sound, and which ought to be kept, if only to keep a check on the theology? Or is it that Order of every kind is an expedient in every age for expressing and preserving the life?

Bartlet does not concern himself with these questions. His work is purely historical, but his historical investigations on the first four centuries give valuable light on them. Also, incidentally, his work throws light on the development of the Church during the period.

In the earlier documents as, for example, the New Testament, the Didache and the Didascalia, Bartlet believes to find evidence of a Church-Order closely related to Church usage, while in later documents there is a tendency to treat Church-Order more in abstraction from the concrete vital aspects of Church life (p. 100), a tendency, that is, to emphasise the idea of a theory of an original constitution or binding Order imposed by divine authority upon the Church (p. 156). This latter naturally led to a new system of law for the Church, liturgies and usages binding etc., and also eventually to the idea of an imposed uniformity. Thus the Church-Order which "had grown up gradually by the free plastic movement of the Church's common mind under the consciousness of a guiding spirit of divine life within it" finally came to claim a "sacrosanct fixity". For a long time, however, in the early centuries the freer movement represented by the prophetic ministry continued to operate and influence the Order of the Church. Bartlet here makes a point, namely that one of the forces making for the ultimate disappearance of the prophetic ministry was the early rise of bishops like Ignatius, who themselves incorporated the prophetic function in their own persons. Another factor making in the same direction was the natural desire on the part of authority to avoid the risk of "factious sectional eucharistic groups arising within a local Church" (p. 159). Such hole and corner meetings he holds formed the background of both Clement of Rome and Ignatius.

Thus the prophetic ministry and all it stood for was finally eliminated from the Church life, though Bartlet maintains

it was an abiding element in the mind of the Church's founder (p. 64). The spirit of it lingered on in monasticism, but that was of necessity outside the organised Church. Bartlet's conclusion is—"Owing to fear of abuses, which meant only half-faith, the use of the full potential life of grace, latent in the Spirit's power in unordained members of Christ's body, was discouraged and gradually atrophied" (p. 168). He himself would seek a form of catholicism "which includes, and no longer excludes, the great ideas connected with the freedom of the Spirit, which are rooted in primitive Christianity, and which the Protestant Reformation has helped us in modern times to recover".

Obviously the treatise is such as any Nonconformist seeking guidance on this question of Church-Order and the idea of Catholicity, or for that matter, on the life of the primitive Church, would do well to read.

A. DAKIN.

Submission in Suffering, by H. H. Rowley. (University of Wales Press Board, 2s. 6d.).

This short book by Professor Rowley of Bangor deals with one special aspect of a very difficult subject. Pain as a fact has been in the world from the very beginning, and pain as a problem has been the despair of thinkers all down the ages. Poets and philosophers in every generation and in every land have dealt with it, but no finally satisfying solution of the mystery seems to be forthcoming, "We have but faith", says Tennyson, "we cannot know, for knowledge is of things we see". But though "we cannot know", we must somehow try to make terms with the situation as it is, and the various religions and philosophies provide the solution that the world's great teachers suggest.

Professor Rowley definitely limits himself to a survey of the problem of "innocent suffering, or suffering that appears to be innocent", and the consequent reactions of the problem on the religious mind as we see it in the chief religions of Asia. He has a bibliography of five closely printed pages, and it is clear that he has carefully worked over the ground. He deals with China, India, Babylonia, Islam, and of course, Judaism and Christianity.

It is plain that suffering, even in the devout, does not produce the same reaction. Some people, for instance, connect suffering and sin so closely together that the one at once suggests the other, and the question of suffering immediately becomes "Who did sin, this man or his parents" to produce this result we see? Others, again, see in suffering, the refiner's furnace, in which God refines by chastening the soul that He loves. Still others regard it as the price that even God has to pay for redemption, and the good man's suffering is his share in the travail that brings

the new creation to birth. But most, especially in the contemplative lands of the East, regard suffering as an evil which must be accepted. Islam says it is from Allah, and that for the vast majority means it is man's fate, though the mystics in Islam would see a good deal more. Hinduism and Buddhism regard suffering as an evil, necessary in our present existence, something to be accepted now in the hope that it may, in another life, or after a series of lives, be escaped from by the coming of nescience, the existence that is no-existence. There are differences in the Indian religions as to the form this escapism takes, and one of the most valuable parts of Professor Rowley's book is his discussion of this point.

A book like this can be appreciated properly only by experts who know the ground. But it can suggest much to the average man that is worth considering, and in a world such as ours is to-day, when the problem of suffering is everywhere so acute, we must always be grateful for the guidance that experts can give.

HENRY COOK.

The Christian Philosophy of History, by S. J. Case.
(University of Chicago Press, and Cambridge Press, 12s.).

This comparatively short book is full of good things, and much erudition has gone into its making. A large part of it is a fascinating study of man's age-long endeavour to penetrate the meaning of history. Professor Case reviews Hebrew and Christian varieties of the providential view of history, with their constant re-adaptation to circumstances, yielding now an apocalyptic hope for the future, now the faith that in the marriage of church and state the divine control is exercised through both alike, and now the belief that the Church alone has the clue to history in its mediation of the divine control. He treats of the attempt to dispense with the meaning of the facts, and to get down scientifically to the actual facts of history, but observes that "to know the facts of the past would seem to be only a scholarly luxury unless this information contributes to effective living in the present" (p. 87). He examines many modern works which find the governing factors of history to lie in geography or in economics, or which view all history through evolutionary spectacles, and find progress to mark all its course, or pessimistic works which condemn the endless futility of all history. He examines Kierkegaard's philosophy of crisis with its historical dualism, and the views which have been based on this, and which regard temporal history as only the story of conflict and tragedy, to be brought to a happy end solely by a divine intervention that inaugurates a new world order. Such a view leads to an utter passivity on man's part, which is quite unshared by Professor

Case. In contrast to the view that "not only is God doing nothing to improve world history, but man himself should realise that he is incapable of effecting advancement" (p. 120), the author observes that "he is blind indeed who cannot see that the heavens declare the glory of God, who cannot perceive that man bears the ineffaceable image of his Divine Maker, and who fails to appreciate the progress of the last twenty centuries in creating a human society that approaches a little nearer to the ideal Kingdom of God" (p. 123).

In all this Professor Case displays great skill in presenting briefly and clearly a large variety of attitudes, and the considerable literature recorded in his footnotes will enable the interested reader to pursue the subject further, and will give him confidence that the author has missed little of importance within his field. He writes well, and frequently his pithy observations on the theories he summarises are both memorable and illuminating.

In the later chapters of the book Professor Case unfolds his own philosophy of history. He emphasises the factors of continuity and of novelty in history, for he finds past, present, and future to be bound together in the unity of a single living whole. "Past and present are only artificial expressions used to denote different stages of one continuous process of time" (p. 162). The present is born of the past, yet not wholly determined by the past, for the essence of life is ever new adaptation. This view is then applied to the Church. Its varied forms are all valid as adaptations to particular circumstances and cultures, and have no other validity. The idea that there is any single form of Christianity which is authentic is scouted. "Each is authentic in the sense that at some time, and for certain groups in specific situations, it served the purpose for which it was designed" (p. 172). That there must be changes in the Church is the inevitable condition of its continued life, but "attempts to restore uniformity, except as they follow unifying processes in contemporary culture, are sure to prove artificial, if not actually dangerous" (p. 167).

On the larger question of the divine control of history, Professor Case maintains that God exercises no direct control, but is active in men. To the reviewer, however, he would seem to assign a much larger place to man than to God, and in practice to condemn God to the position of a spectator watching men work things out. "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation, but by dint of strenuous endeavour on the part of men who serve Him from generation to generation throughout the evolving centuries" (p. 218). This seems quite inadequate, and to rest on a somewhat shallow philosophy, which is disappointing as the

goal of so good and so suggestive a book. This appears clearly on p. 181, where we read: "In the processes of history, one generation's mistakes saddle troubles upon the children, while the sinning ancestors escape scot-free. . . . Can we believe that God is so arbitrary a monarch, or so vindictive a feudal noble, that He could find satisfaction in executing punishment upon guiltless sons and daughters of sinful parents who are peaceably reposing in their tombs? Calamity is not a divine judgment, but is a natural consequence of failure to embrace opportunity".

Here it may be observed that the divine justice is not really saved by ascribing to the operation of "natural" laws what is felt to be unworthy of God, unless God is held to be not responsible for the "natural" laws. It may also be observed that these natural laws are really the expression of the divine benevolence, and are in no sense unworthy of God. To seize on the entail of suffering which one generation may bring on another, to impugn either the justice of God or the fairness of the operation of natural laws, seems to the reviewer unworthy of men who receive a vast entail of blessing by the operation of the same natural laws in the mercy of God. To those who recall the vast inheritance of knowledge and culture and freedom into which they have entered, won at the cost of high sacrifice by those who have gone before, and theirs without toil, save the toil of entering into it and preserving it, it seems unworthy to cavil because their fathers made some mistakes and left some problems for them to solve. Moreover, it is rarely true that it is the sour grapes which the fathers ate which are the sole cause of the children's teeth being set on edge. Professor Case instances the "sinners" who framed the Treaty of Versailles, who have escaped the consequences of their "crime", while their descendants are drafted for war. To the reviewer it seems an undue simplification of history to leap from 1919 to 1939, as though for twenty years an impotent world merely sat in a historical vacuum to watch the seeds of Versailles mature an inevitable harvest. He prefers to recognise both continuity and initiative in history, and to ascribe to both their share in creating events. He also prefers to view the operation of natural laws in their whole working, and to find the hand of God in them; to find the hand of God, too, active in history, both active in men who are responsive to His will, and actively co-operating with them. For He is not wholly immanent in men, and is not limited in His activity to His immanence in men. He can set a term beyond which men's folly and iniquity may not pass, yet in His wisdom He sets this term without infringing the freedom with which He has endowed men.

While, therefore, the reviewer finds Professor Case's

philosophy of history to be far from satisfying, he regards his book as one of high excellence, which may be commended without reserve for its masterly review of the history of the philosophy of history.

H. H. ROWLEY.

China Among the Nations, by H. R. Williamson, (Student Christian Movement Press, 6s.)

This, as we might expect from its authorship, is an excellent book, timely, interesting and informative. Dr. Williamson spent long enough in China to acquire a deep and abiding love for its people, but in addition he got so thoroughly alongside the Chinese mind, that he is said to be one of the few Westerners who could crack a joke in Chinese, and something of the urbanity we usually associate with Chinese philosophy has become part and parcel of his make-up. No one, therefore, is better qualified to write a book like this. The book falls into three parts; there is first Ancient China, covering Names and Characteristics, History and Philosophy; next comes Transition: Conception of a Nation, covering Western Impact and Eastern Reaction; and finally, we have Modern China, covering Birth, Struggle for Survival, Growth, Coming-of-age, and World Recognition. It will thus be seen that the canvas is a big one, but it abounds in intimate sketches of all sorts, and the Chinese scene becomes clearer as a consequence. Half way through the book we get the sentence, "I arrived in China November, 1908, as one of a party of eleven 'tenderfoot' British missionaries", and from that point onwards we follow events as seen by Dr. Williamson personally, and this gives the book a certain intimacy that adds to the attractiveness of the narrative of the rise of modern China. Dr. Williamson interestingly discusses the movement of external and internal politics, culminating in the war with Japan, and the rise of China to equality with Britain, America and Russia as one of the four major powers on whose alignment the future of the world must largely depend. Naturally, too, he shows us how the Christian Church is affected by all this, and he gives us grounds for confidence in the future. The Chinese have a basic quality of character that should provide a firm foundation for a strong Christian democracy, and China's part among the nations must be increasingly great. A book like this must do a great deal of good.

HENRY COOK.

Essays in Orthodox Dissent, by Bernard L. Manning,
(Independent Press, 6s.)

The Rodborough Bede Book, (Independent Press, 4s.)

The Independent Press is to be warmly thanked for making available again these two books. Mr. Manning's *Essays* first appeared in 1939, and since his lamented death have gained a new preciousness, for they represent his most important and stimulating literary legacy to the Free Churches. His learning and insight, his strong convictions, his gift for clear, pungent and witty expression, are seen at their best in these pages. This is a volume which will long continue to be prized.

The Rodborough Bede Book consists of the forms of service compiled by the late Rev. C. E. Watson, of Rodborough. This edition has been lithographed from the privately printed original. Among Free Church service books this has a place all its own. It will be treasured by all those who knew Mr. Watson and his remarkable Cotswold ministry, and will be valuable to all responsible for the leadership of public worship.