

Reviews

Baptism and Church in the New Testament, by Johannes Schneider.
Translated by Ernest A. Payne. (Carey Kingsgate Press,
3s. 6d.).

Inevitably, in these days, one reads anything written on Baptism as a contribution to polemics: for the debate continues (though very one-sidedly), and the issues grow more obscure as the conclusions, mostly unwelcome, are announced with greater confidence. Dr. Schneider's lecture, however, cannot be so read. For one reason, it is too dogmatic on many debatable points. Proselyte Baptism, for example, is somewhat summarily dismissed as having no decisive influence on Johannine or Christian Baptism; Paul's view of Baptism is held to be "deeper" than that found elsewhere in the early Church, agreeing with that of the first Christian community on certain points but providing "the determinative interpretation of Baptism"; the central issue is stated in the form "The discussion about Baptism resolves itself in the end into the question which Baptism is scriptural?" Neither point is by any means settled: and the third begs the whole question—many would claim (as Prof. Schneider later shows) that infant Baptism *is* scriptural, and others that scripturalness is not essential to validity.

A second reason why the lecture is unsatisfactory polemically is that the many textual and historical questions that cluster around key passages are ignored, and proof-texts like *Mark* xvi. 16, *Acts* viii. 37, *John* iii. 22, iv. 1, 2 and the Pastorals (as Paul's) are quoted with an unshaken assurance that leaves the writer open to obvious counter-arguments. It is, therefore, rather as an exposition of one viewpoint that the essay must be judged, and in this light we cannot but be thankful for so clear an insistence on two of the main issues—the relation of faith and Baptism, and the importance of faith-Baptism to a right understanding of the Church. On the former point, the usual arguments about household Baptisms are led and answered, though Dr. Rowley's valuable contention, that the proselyte Baptism analogy is all against the Baptism of subsequent children of proselytes, is not used; and Dr. Cullman's shrewd thrust—that the New Testament knows nothing of the later Baptism of children of Christian parents is not noticed. Professor Schneider's denial that 1 *Cor.* vii. 14 supports infant Baptism is clearly justified, but some will like his treatment of the verse even less than Dr.

Cullmann's. And there is still need to show the *inner* necessity of faith before Baptism: the appeal to scripture is not entirely sufficient.

On the relation of Baptism to the Church, the issue between People's Church and confessional Church (and the necessity of faith for membership in the Body of Christ) is well presented; the inference, explicitly drawn, that there cannot be two different Baptisms side by side in the same Church would seem to be a side-glance at current suggestions for re-union. The lecture ends, rather abruptly, with the somewhat surprising declaration that the question of the Church has precedence over the question of Baptism. One would have thought, in the light of the New Testament and the previous discussion of faith and Baptism, that the order of precedence is Gospel—Faith—Baptism—Church: one determining the other *in that sequence*.

Dr. E. A. Payne, whose translation reads, on the whole, very smoothly, remarks that the line of argument will be new to many Baptists, "and to some perhaps at first somewhat unexpected and uncongenial." This probably refers, firstly, to the emphasis laid upon the "cleansing" and "remission" aspects of the rite. Dr. Schneider does not connect this very clearly with Paul's doctrine of union with Christ in death and resurrection, leaving a hiatus between two conceptions of Baptism's meaning. Yet the "cleansing" interpretation is prior in time and probably in theology, too. Secondly: the plain declaration that "Christian Baptism . . . is not to be regarded as a symbol, nor as an action which sets forth, however clearly, the inward experience of salvation . . . not sufficient to regard it as merely an act of obedience . . ." may be a salutary challenge to some very familiar but very superficial and unscriptural Baptist conceptions. Thirdly: Prof. Schneider's repeated insistence that "in Baptism something decisive is accomplished by God and Christ" will sound strange in too many Baptist ears. "Baptism results in the forgiveness of sins. . . . Baptism effects the total and complete cleansing of the person. . . . Baptism makes the power of the death and resurrection of Christ effective for us in the accomplishment of the saving process." Such words are too numerous and varied to be unguarded; they represent an attempt to return to a more adequate and more scriptural view of the spiritual importance and effect of Baptism. In so emphasizing the "transitive" and "effective" significance of the rite, Prof. Schneider has shown his understanding of Baptist weakness at this point; until believers' Baptism is so interpreted we shall make little headway in ecumenical discussions of the principles we defend. But emphasis is not enough: there is need for clear interpretation of what that "effectiveness" of Baptism is, and precise definition of what is involved in the "sacramental" understanding of *believers'* Baptism.

Cambridge Greek Testament: Colossians and Philemon, by C. F. D. Moule. (Cambridge University Press, 21s.).

Although it is nearly eighty years since the Cambridge Greek Testament began its invaluable service of student and preacher—eighty years of immense and far-reaching changes in the historical, linguistic, textual and theological approach to the New Testament—the “CGT” has dated far less than most commentaries of its period. Nevertheless, new information and new emphases demand recognition, and a revision of certain volumes is now promised, under the general editorship of Professor C. F. D. Moule, who is also responsible for this pioneer volume on *Colossians and Philemon*. The commentary is based upon the Bible Society text (second edition) though this is, unfortunately, not printed. In crown octavo, with comfortable print, 170 pages cannot of course pretend to be exhaustive, but the style is condensed, the documentation full, about one quarter of the space is given to Introduction, and several detached notes are added. In discussions, the tabular form saves much space as well as helping to clarify the argument. All in all, the first impression of slightness of treatment proves on closer reading to be deceptive: very much is given, or at least placed within reach, in brief compass.

In accordance with the current “synthetic” and theological approach to New Testament studies, pride of place is given in the Introduction to the religious thought of the epistle, and this emphasis is fairly maintained in the earlier (though not the later) notes. (It is interesting to remark, as a measure of the change of direction in half a century’s study, that the corresponding earlier volume, by Lukyn Williams (1907) with more than three times the space available, does not deal at all with this theme in its Introduction). Other current trends noticeable in the new commentary are a gently critical side-glance at Barthian thought, while dealing with Christ’s relation to the cosmos; the full recognition of the catechetical ministry of the apostolic Church; and the excellent treatment (from a Baptist point of view) which we are now coming to expect of the passages on Baptism. The present volume retains the close attention to strictly grammatical exegesis which made the earlier books so fascinating and useful, and which is so priceless a discipline for the student.

The intended readership is deliberately left undefined (p. vi) and this probably explains, if it does not justify, a certain inequality of texture which marks the whole book. The section on the religious thought of the epistle is thin and inadequate for the college, yet difficult for the school; the argument about the reconstruction of the Philemon story seems to say either too much or too little; so does the good, but inconclusive, summary of the debate about the place of Paul’s imprisonment. Sometimes the balancing of opinions

seems a little overdone and confusing, especially for the beginner, and one wonders whether those who approach the epistle for the first time via this guide will not receive an impression of much argumentation about difficulties and uncertainties, and little of the original purpose and abiding message of the letter—in spite of the “religious” approach. A clear and positive summary of the contents of the epistle would have been a valuable addition. In the same way, the frequent Latin, and references to German sources, seem out of harmony with the “new readers begin here” tone of the section (by J. N. Sanders) on textual criticism. It is probable that this appearance of attempting to be all things to all readers is imposed by the economics of publishing in an expensive period—the earlier series varied from 2/6d. to 6s.!

Attractive to read (and handle) this first volume is marked rather by judicious summary of current debate, than by originality of thought or illuminating comment. Inevitably it challenges the question whether the new volumes will continue to serve as long as did the old. It seems unlikely: too many important matters are left as open questions; Paul's imprisonment, the Colossian heresy, the relation to *Ephesians*, the theological problem of the Christology (here posed more sharply than ever), and several textual and exegetical enigmas, remain as elusive as ever. A lot more dust must settle before the definitive New Testament commentary for this generation can be attempted. But this revision of a long-loved series promises to be a milestone on the way, and perhaps a welcome signpost.

R. E. O. WHITE

Sursum Corda, by Sydney H. Moore. (Independent Press, 8s. 6d.).

These brief but scholarly studies of some German hymnwriters will be read with pleasure and profit by all who love hymns and realize their significance in the life of the Church. The troubled background out of which came some of the most triumphant utterances of faith in the 16th and 17th centuries is clearly set forth in these pages and Martin Rinckhart, Paul Gerhardt and Gerhard Terstegen become more than mere names. A chapter on the hymns of the Anabaptists would have been welcome, and it is a pity that Mr. Moore does not acknowledge the fact that the chapter on “Now thank we all our God” appeared in the *Baptist Quarterly* for April, 1954.

ERNEST A. PAYNE

Thanksgiving for Childbirth, and Dedication of Parents: Notes on a suggested Order of Service, by W. G. Baker. (Berean Press, 2s.).

Like the Baptist Churches, the Churches of Christ are faced with the problem of finding some satisfactory equivalent for the

social, emotional and sentimental values enshrined in infant Baptism while refusing its theological implications. The title given to this Order of Service at once reveals the radical standpoint adopted by the author. The Service itself follows closely that of Dr. M. E. Aubrey, but it is set within the Communion Service; the justification offered for this is unconvincing, and it might have been better simply to admit that the weekly morning Communion of the Churches of Christ makes it inevitable. The motive of service to the local community, offered by a "gathered Church" set in a very mixed society, is emphasized here much more than in most discussions of this subject, and the different possible reactions to the delicate problems that arise, of balancing Church principles against popular misunderstanding, are well described—though without resolving the dilemma involved. Where only one parent is a Christian, and the use of the full Christian rite (with solemn question and promises) is only partially appropriate, "it is more right to choose to be weak in logic than to be lacking in love." (Doubtless, but "weak in logic" is so often a euphemism for "inconsistent in practice"). Where neither parent is Christian, a Cradle Roll service in Junior Sunday School is substituted. One imagines this neat adjustment might call for still further resources of pastoral diplomacy and still more involved explanations if the two families concerned happen to be close neighbours! Nor is it clear why, if the full service should be held in church during worship to express the Church's responsibility to the child of a Christian home, any less responsibility should be felt for children of non-Christian background. In a pamphlet anxious to face honestly the "realities" and "anomalies" of the gathered Church's ministry within a Christianized society, it is surprising to find no recognition of the fact that however clearly or often we say what we mean and do not mean, people on the fringe of the Church will continue to find their own meaning in the service, and attribute to baby's "being done" whatever superstitious or religious significance they choose. The Church cannot evade responsibility, in a society indoctrinated with infant Baptism, for what people misunderstand. Nor is anything said of the situation created by other Churches' refusal to accept our "Dedication" as qualifying for confirmation—a sore point with many parents when the fact becomes known later. If infant-dedication in any form is to continue in Churches practising believers' Baptism, this essay probably indicates successfully the form and argument which will ultimately be adopted. But some will remain unconvinced, and prefer to keep the service for Church members, confine it to the home, and develop the Cradle Roll Service as welcome to Sunday School for all children alike. Mr. Baker would put us all further in his debt if he pursued the matter in a full-length discussion.

Exposition and Encounter: Preaching in the Context of Worship; (Joseph Smith Memorial Lecture), by J. S. Stewart. (The Berean Press, 2s.).

A booklet on preaching by Dr. J. S. Stewart needs no recommendation; to read it is to hear again that eloquent, earnest, moving voice and feel afresh the spell of great utterance. The appeal for expository preaching, to deliver us from spiritual provincialism, to confer authority, to make the Bible relevant to our time; and the emphasis that "the aim of exposition is encounter"—meeting with God in the Word spoken within the context of worship—bring home to us again the strength and power of this living prince of preachers. If we wish the lecturer had also told us how to convince modern congregations that the sermon *is* part of worship, how to make modern people *like* the faithful, painstaking exposition of what is written, how to "demythologise" the written Word, so as to reveal its ageless essence without handling the Word of God deceitfully or being hounded as heretics, that only means we wish Professor Stewart would lecture again. And to leave the hearer asking for more is the final vindication of all preaching!

R. E. O. WHITE

The Cross is Heaven, by A. J. Appasamy. World Christian Books; United Society for Christian Literature. (Lutterworth Press, 2s. 6d.).

Bishop Appasamy knew Sadhu Sundar Singh and is at present engaged on a full-length biography of him. Here the Bishop gives us a short account of his life and then an anthology of his writings, culled from unpublished fragments and magazine articles. This is a refreshing little book, because it reminds us that our Lord is not an exclusively Western possession. Sundar Singh approaches Him with something of the Indian preoccupation with mystical religion and the fierce devotion of a Bhakti cult. The result is a new approach to Christ, and one which often makes the reader feel ashamed of his own lukewarm and casual devotion. Much of the book is specifically Eastern and "not transferable," but how much we need a westernised version of this burning devotion!

The Reformed Pastor, by Richard Baxter. A Treasury of Christian Books. (S.C.M. Press, 8s. 6d.).

Dr. Hugh Martin, who is editing this valuable series of reprints, tells us in his foreword that although Baxter was episcopally ordained, and had in fact recently refused a bishopric, he came out of the Church of England on the passing of the Act of Uniformity

in 1662, because he could not accept the view that Episcopal ordination was a necessity. Dr. Martin reminds us that Baxter did not mean "Protestant" by the word "reformed." He meant "recalled to faithful service."

This book, written in 1655, is a powerful plea for re-consecration to the work of the ministry. Baxter's sincerity and zeal shine compellingly through every page and it is a humbling experience to read it. He argues that if a man is to be a pastor at all he should be a pastor after the pattern of God's calling and commission. He does not spare us in exposing our weakness and laziness, our lack of spirituality and our specious excuses for it. Yet there is no bitterness or superiority in him. He has a wide and charitable outlook. It is interesting to find him saying: "Is the distance so great that Presbyterian, Episcopal and Independent might not be well agreed? Were they but heartily willing and forward for peace, they might—I know they might." He would, I am afraid, be deeply disappointed to find that after 300 years they are still so far from being heartily willing and forward for peace.

Dr. Martin has cut Baxter's wordiness down to reasonable proportions without sacrificing any of the argument and has produced a book which every minister should possess and read periodically for the good of his soul—and the souls of his congregation.

Mental Pain and the Cure of Souls, by H. Guntrip. (Independent Press, Ltd., 10s. 6d.).

Dr. Guntrip was formerly a Congregational minister and is now a whole-time psychiatrist at Leeds. This book, he tells us, grew out of a lecture which he gave to old students of New College, London, at an Easter school, and it is especially intended for ministers, though Professor Grensted tells us in his foreword that he hopes that it will also be read by psychiatrists. They will certainly be more at home with Part I than other readers, for Dr. Guntrip takes us through a fairly stiff survey of the history and present position of his subject. He is a devoted pupil of Dr. W. R. D. Fairbairn, to whose work he constantly refers. It is interesting to see how Freud's detached scientific attitude to his subject is now considered to be old-fashioned, and the patient, as a person in a world of persons, is regarded as the victim of unsatisfactory personal relations. This, of course, brings religion into the picture because, as Professor Macmurray has lately been reminding us, religion is concerned with personal relationships. The truly religious man is the man who is rightly related to God and his neighbour. The amateur psychiatrist who, one fears, is often found in the ministerial ranks, will not find much grist for his mill here. But the book will be most salutary for

him, because it will impress on him that the mental and nervous patient needs really expert and lengthy treatment, and cannot be cured by tinkering, however well meant. This book will, however, show him the lines on which modern treatment proceeds, and even more valuable, it will acquaint him with the *mise-en-scène* of mental pain and disorder.

Prayer and Life's Highest, by Paul S. Rees. (Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 8s. 6d.).

Dr. Rees became known in this country a few years ago when he was here with Dr. Billy Graham. This series of Bible Studies was obviously delivered to a Conference, and one wonders whether they were given at Keswick.

Dr. Rees has taken prayers of St. Paul from Ephesians, Philipians, Colossians and I and II Thessalonians, and in six studies he seeks to discover what was involved in prayer for the apostle. They are competent studies and often deepen our understanding of St. Paul's conceptions, though one would hardly agree with the blurb on the dust-cover that they will "put the reader in possession of wealth so vast as to leave him quite breathless." There are many illustrations and the studies are easy to read. They are sometimes coloured by the writer's theological outlook.

DENIS LANT

Thomas Rudyard, Early Friends' "Oracle of Law," by Alfred W. Braithwaite. (Friends' Historical Society, 1s. 6d.).

This reprint of the Presidential Address to the Friends' Historical Society in 1956 deals with Thomas Rudyard, a practising attorney who was imprisoned under the Conventicle Act in 1670, gave great assistance to Fox and others when they found themselves under arrest and subsequently assisted Penn in America. Rudyard had many Baptists as companions when he was in Newgate and did not get on with them very well. His "pamphlet war" with Richard Hobbs, Thomas Hicks and Jeremiah Ives did not do great credit to either party.

ERNEST A. PAYNE

Faith and Logic: Oxford Essays in Philosophical Theology. Edited by Basil Mitchell. (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 21s.).

Students of theology concerned at the current disparagement of reason in theological enquiry, and the growth of illogical, and even incomprehensible, modes of exegesis, who may turn to this volume hoping for support for more rational methods, will be disappointed.

For here is little about logic, as commonly understood, and even less about faith. Here, rather, is an attempt by a group of very earnest and competent Anglicans, at apologetic restatement of fundamental theological techniques—what is meant by Revelation, what is implied in talk about the soul, and grace, how theologians reason, and the logical status and validity of theological statements—in face of the sweeping Empiricist rejection of all metaphysics by the Linguistic Analysis school of philosophy, successors to the Logical Positivists.

Full appreciation of what the various writers offer may well be made difficult for many readers by memories of their own studies in a philosophy of religion which did not concern itself merely with linguistic usage and the logical grammar of sentences, but with a wider synthesis of the partial insights of the various sciences, and the search for answers to ultimate questions about the nature of religious experience and the implications of its astonishing story of development. Presumably philosophy will return in due course to these larger problems, for ever-increasing specialisation in science only sharpens the necessity for some satisfying synthesis, if life as a whole is to be intelligible. Meanwhile the painstaking analysis of types of sentences, the elaborate distinction of the usage of terms—indicative, descriptive, prescriptive, emotive, performative, and the rest—and the seemingly arbitrary erection of empiricist prejudices into tests of the meaningfulness of statements, all seems to be very thin fare beside the range and depth of traditional religious philosophy. In addition, the average minister (at any rate) has little opportunity of keeping in touch with the latest developments in the philosophical debate; he may be surprised to find how far such thought has moved since A. J. Ayer's *Language, Truth and Logic*. In consequence it will sometimes appear that the problems discussed are unreal, and that strange ideas are set up only to be demolished.

In reply it can only be said that the apologetic task must be done, and here it is seriously and thoroughly attempted; and that even the reader only slightly familiar with the field will find reward for patience. Certainly he will find himself looking with a much more critical eye at the language, methods and assumptions of some current theology. He may be profitably disturbed as he watches a keen logical mind dissect the methods of theological discussion, or analyse the meaning of "soul," or the use and "erosion" of parables like "Father." He will be at once stimulated and exasperated—as by the brilliant chapter on Revelation, the most rewarding and the most frustrating in the book. And he will, perhaps, occasionally, simply give up trying to understand what a paragraph is meant to say. But all the while he will be aware that he is wrestling—albeit vicariously—with a genuine problem: the impact of material science and technology upon philosophy has been not

merely to change its direction, but to transform (so far) its nature, and reduce the intellectual glories of Plato and Kant to a mere grammar of science. Philosophy has contracted to Logic, and Logic to Linguistics, all in the service of a scientific materialism that denies not only the truth, but the *sense*, of any statement not either tautological or empirically verifiable. This challenge may evoke impatience, but it nevertheless must be met.

To assess the total impression of a volume so varied and in some points so contradictory, is impossible. Some will lay the book down content to declare that there are a great many more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in *this* philosophy—especially in heaven. Some will be reminded of the frog and the centipede, and wonder how discourse that has stimulated and satisfied the world's best for centuries can possibly be shown now to have been all illogical argumentation about nonsense—even “useful, necessary, profound, or valuable nonsense” (p. 4). Some may suspect that to try to express the realities of religious experience within the limited concepts of this philosophy may prove to be as futile an undertaking as the attempt—say—to reduce the Christian ethic to hedonist terms. And probably all who have thought at all in this field will be strengthened, especially by the last chapter but by other passages also, in their suspicion, not only that the “principle of verification” is itself *ex hypothesi* either a meaningless statement, being itself unverifiable, or else a mere linguistic convention, an empiricist assumption erected into a rule of interpretation; but also that the whole Positivist philosophy is shot through with assumptions as truly metaphysical, and a great deal less respectable, than those which underlie theology itself.

There is obviously, as the authors repeatedly suggest, a great deal more thinking still to be done before the confusions are cleared and the philosophy of the scientific age finds a balanced expression. It is good to know there are those who are qualified as Christians, as well as Logicians, to contribute to it. The book is beautifully and accurately produced, and the editing unobtrusive, but sufficient.

The Making of the Sermon, by Robert J. McCracken. (Student Christian Movement Press, Ltd., 10s. 6d.).

It is probably unfair to judge a book by what one hoped for, and a discussion of sermon-making by the occupant of the Riverside Drive pulpit admittedly raises exceptionally high expectations. But even when allowances are made, this book is a disappointment. Dr. McCracken *chats* about preaching in general, the various types of sermon, the need of a good style, and only in the last ten pages reaches “the making of the sermon.” This section begins, as many

will think, with the main work already done, with text and theme chosen and abundant accumulated material ready for sifting. But it is probably up to that point that most help is needed. The regular quotations tend to hamper what argument there is and lend a superficial air to what could have been a serious discussion of the many questions which beset preaching in a non-literary, "visual," propaganda-resistant age — problems of authority, translation, "demythologising," preaching-as-worship, and the special problems raised by radio-preaching, by "mass-counselling," by the relation of preaching to the changing forms of culture (especially to the preaching-theatre), and the decline of preaching in the revival of liturgical worship. True, most of these questions have little to do with sermon-making, but neither has Dr. McCracken's line of thought. The necessity of possessing a sense of divine commission is emphasized, but the difficulty of preserving this under modern conditions (time-limit ministries, appointment by popular election, fixed retirement dates, severe limitation of preaching-time, and public opinion about the pulpit) is not considered. In lectures to first-year theologicals, the various points made doubtless had value, though one suspects that some of the judgments expressed would occasion vigorous discussion—"Personal quality is the secret of spiritual power"; "what they valued most was . . . interest"; "the calibre of a minister can be judged by his library" (this last, with the book itself priced at 10s. for two hours light reading, seems particularly heartless). A minor blemish or two (as the typographical inconsistency, pp. 30, 39, 43, 45; "skillfully," "self-anatomy," and "The Gates of *the New Life*"—missing the point of J. S. Stewart's title) do not spoil a very pleasing format. One would like to think Dr. McCracken would lend his mind and pen to a much more thorough examination of his subject before he finally lays it aside.

The Deacon: His Ministry in our Churches, by the Moderators of the Congregational Union. (Independent Press Ltd., 1s. 6d.).

The Moderators of the Congregational Union have here produced a statement on the qualifications, work, responsibilities and methods of election of the Church Diaconate (together with a sketch of its history, and a summary of denominational, financial and legal information concerning its duties) which should prove of inestimable value. It will recall experienced men to their earlier vision and dedication, and kindle in newly-elected leaders a worthy conception of their privilege. The whole of the counsel is as justly applicable to Baptist as to Congregational circles "only more so"; a Baptist edition (merely substituting our own denominational terms and addresses) produced in collaboration with the Independent Press would be most useful. The ideal is described in full awareness of

the actual conditions prevailing in local churches, and the aims are defined in a wholly admirable way. One delicate responsibility—that of handling applications for membership—is not mentioned; and some brief treatment of the conduct of Deacons' Meetings would have been welcome. A larger question arises from so closely integrating deacons and minister in the pastoral oversight of the Church; in practice, the tendency to equate minister and deacon (except only in preaching) can lead to confusion of authority and leadership, and the minister's special training and function (and his comparative isolation from church family feuds!) can be overlooked. But this is a fault merely in emphasis: deacons, old and new, should buy and keep this profitable handbook and read it afresh on the anniversary of their election every year.

The Ministry of Our Churches: by the Moderators of the Congregational Union. (Independent Press, 1s.).

Baptists cannot read this "report" of twenty years' of Congregationalism without quickened sympathy and a shared concern. Four pages of graphs show decreases over twenty years in ministers, students, churches, and membership; a sorry story too like our own. The Preface declares, "Plainly no task is more urgent than the recruiting of the right kind of man (and woman) for the full-time Ministry." But despite the steep rise in "deletions" in recent years nothing is said of the related (and equally urgent) problem of keeping the recruits already gained. Publication of the figures reveals considerable courage, though one looks in vain for any explanation or analysis of causes. In fact the graphs have no relation to the chapters of the report, which deal instead with the minister's duties as evangelist, pastor, preacher, trainer of lay-leaders, and leader of the whole Church. Most of the counsel here offered is already familiar to those who have sat under pastoral-theology "pep-talks" in ministerial Retreats, and as so often it loses weight by being offered by men who are "Moderators" and "have all been Ministers of Churches"—that is, eminently *successful* men, who have now left the front-line ministry they so eloquently magnify. Nothing at all is said about study, either for the minister's immediate work or for his contribution—all too rare—to the theological thinking of the day. For ourselves, probably the highest value the Congregational Report could have would be to provoke a similar, and equally courageous production, with comaparable graphs, and a thorough analysis of all the factors at work, by a group of our own ministers, not all of them highly "successful," and none of them out of pastoral office. A misprint in Graph 1 (288 for 228) makes the position look worse than it is, and one on page 27 ("responsibile") has a nice touch of irony.

Antidote to Doubt, by A. E. Gould. (Independent Press, 6s. 6d.).

The recurrent note of evangelistic appeal makes one want to commend this book as at least aware that there is more to evangelism than emotion, and that problems of *belief* must be faced in the approach to the unconverted. Nevertheless it is not easy to conceive the readership intended, or the purpose which determined the method chosen. Describing at the outset the dangers of the modern "infection" of unbelief, the writer expounds in reply the seven clauses of the Apostles' Creed; he eschews "proof" as foredoomed to failure (although the first chapter marshals "evidence" and the tone of the whole book is argumentative), and declares "What I intend to do is to state my personal faith . . . tell you what I believe." One wonders how much conviction this will carry to anyone seriously afflicted with intellectual perplexities about Christianity, especially when—owing to the method followed—a disproportionate emphasis is laid upon subjects like the Virgin Birth, the present state of the dead, and the correct interpretation of a passage in *Job*, and when one feels that occasionally the real weight of objections that can be raised against Christian beliefs has not been fairly represented. As an elementary introduction to classic Christian affirmations, for Bible-class use, the book has real promise, in spite of phrases like "non-objectivisable space," "supra-polar space," "moral relativism issuing in ethical neutralism." Some unguarded remarks on the Trinity, on the state of the Church, and on the witness of Nature (pp. 14-15, which weaken somewhat the argument of the first chapter) will not help the earnest wrestler with religious doubt, and the impact of the whole would have been greatly strengthened if some simple suggestions about how to *find* faith had been added to the all-too-brief closing remarks on the necessity of personal encounter.

Training in Visitation, by L. R. Misselbrook. (Carey Kingsgate Press, 2s.).

It was doubtless an excellent idea to follow up the account of the Leavesden Road (Watford) evangelistic experiment (*Winning the People for Christ*) with this summary of the kind of training and preparation involved; but this booklet has nevertheless an intrinsic value of its own, and may well exercise the wider influence. Here, the main questions hitherto left unanswered are considered, and in a simple, direct and convincing style the teaching and counsel given in intending visitors is set down, and their experiences shared. Among all the literature evoked by the present concern for evangelism, these two booklets are probably the most sane and realistic, and by their concentration upon the evangelistic task of the local

Church, the most likely to achieve *permanent* results. Of course some questions remain, especially the prior question of the spiritual quality of the Church into which the outsider comes—so often to be disappointed. The excellent chapter on leading men to Christ will not please all Baptists; and any implied assumption that any Church, any Minister, can do this kind of work is false: "He gave *some*, evangelists." On the other hand this extremely useful account of Christian friendship in action with evangelistic motive has relevance wider than that of evangelistic methods. One is left with simple but urgent questions: Can this kind of work really be organized, especially when it involves doing other people's washing, or minding the baby—does not this kind of thing depend wholly upon individual offering, and being trusted? Is organization *necessary*: are not Christian people everywhere doing just these things, without being "teamed" to do it? But especially: Would this booklet stir *my* Church to attempt it more often, more widely, and to greater effect? It is certain that if this moving story does not, then nothing will.

R. E. O. WHITE

The Cross in the Church, by Stephen Neil. (Independent Press, 4s.).

This book contains four lectures given at the L.M.S. Summer School in 1956. They are printed as delivered with, the writer says, "a few minor concessions." A few more, concessions would have improved the book considerably and avoided some jarring phrases and unfortunate statements. For example, the reference to the observance of Communion in most Free Churches is the opposite of the truth, at least as far as Baptists are concerned.

There is no doubt about the liveliness of the lectures and the scholarship of the lecturer. He considers first the various groups responsible for the death of Jesus; then the redeeming purpose of God in Old Testament times, in Christ and in the Church; then the fact of conflict and of the persecution of Christians in a world of sin and pride; and finally the present-day issues and conflicts. This is a stimulating book to mind and heart and good value for money.

The Seven Deadly Sins, by Billy Graham. (Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 5s.).

The power of Billy Graham as a pungent and penetrating preacher is evident in this small book. He is direct, challenging and personal, but largely limits his consideration of these sins to the individual, disregarding our involvement in them as members of a sinful society.

When Christ Comes Again, by J. J. Muller. (Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 7s. 6d.).

The writer of this book is Professor of New Testament Theology in a Seminary of the Dutch Reformed Church in S. Africa. His point of view is a conservative one, but he is not bigoted or unbalanced in his treatment of the Second Coming. He bases his teaching upon the Scriptures and honestly tries to take account of all the passages relevant to this subject and attempts to reconcile them. Whether readers can follow him all the way or not will depend largely on their own particular view of the Scriptures.

The Wondrous Cross, by H. F. Lovell Cocks. (Independent Press, 5s.).

This is a very helpful little book, especially suitable for Lent reading. It gives an account of God's plan for salvation in simple terms but with the evidence of real scholarship and deep faith. The thirteen short chapters are full of meaty and wise teaching, and many preachers, as well as Church members, will get much stimulus from reading them. It is such a book as we should expect from the writer, that keeps us near to the heart of our Christian faith but never lets us forget the world in which we live.

The Story of the Cross, by Leon Morris. (Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 8s. 6d.).

This is a devotional study of *Matthew* xxvi-xxviii, based upon Lenten addresses given in Melbourne, Australia. The writer works through these three chapters section by section, meditating on each, and giving evidence of scholarship and a discerning devotional spirit. There are many stimulating thoughts here, and few lay preachers (or others) could read this book without getting many ideas for sermons and mid-week addresses.

L. J. MOON

Prayers and Bible Readings for Young Wives' Clubs, by Marjorie Shave. (Independent Press, Ltd., 2s. 6d.).

This little book contains twenty sets of Bible Readings and prayers on topics of particular interest to young married women. They include material suitable for Christmas, Easter, Whitsun and Harvest, and the book will be most valuable in the hands of a sensitive club leader.

Praying: How, When, Where and Why, by Muriel Lester. (Independent Press, Ltd., 4s.).

Anything which Miss Lester writes is sure to have a deeply spiritual atmosphere and this book is no exception. It is, however, a pity that a

book which seems intended for beginners is not more specific and concrete. Miss Lester is well acquainted with the devotional life of the Eastern religions, and it may be that this is one reason for the fact that she often tells us little about the simple, concrete side of the prayer life. This book, in my judgment, will be of most value to those who are already well launched on the life of devotion. To them it will be a stimulus and enrichment.

DENIS LANT

Beautiful Hands, by Reginald Morrish. (Independent Press, Ltd.; 6s.).

These short meditative essays reflecting upon incidents of everyday life are by the author of *Christ with the C.I.D.*, and breathe an atmosphere of simplicity, Christian sentiment, charm and quietness of mind as far removed from anything associated with Scotland Yard as can well be imagined. Neither argument nor exposition is here, a somewhat unsophisticated faith is assumed, and some of the incidents which awaken reflection are neither memorable nor significant. Yet the total effect is pleasing, and for minds weary of "stimulus," "tension" and "problems" the result is soothing. When the writer strays beyond his field, to consider Spiritualism, the resurrection, the Advent, or preaching, his touch is much less sure; one wonders if he has yet understood the problems. But such lapses apart, the book is excellently suited as a gift to those whose immediate need is not discussion or doctrine, but a simple, heartening reminder of comfortable things.

What Jesus asked, by S. W. Carruthers. (Independent Press, Ltd., 2s. 6d.).

Twelve of the simpler questions which Jesus put to His hearers form the link which unites these otherwise varied children's talks into an attractive series. The lessons are simple and practical, dealing with the essential but often overlooked elementary steps in the development of Christian character, while the Scripture background is used with reverent and often illuminating imagination. Perhaps here and there a little further elaboration would add weight to a rather thin impression, but on the whole both content and form make this a worthy aid to children's worship.

R. E. O. WHITE

A Handbook of Congregationalism, by Ernest J. Price. (Independent Press, 3s.).

As a handy, pocket-sized, clear and concise guide to the beliefs and practices of the Congregationalists this useful little book—now twice revised since its original appearance in 1924—could hardly be improved upon. It is not correct, however, in stating that Baptists adhere to immersion simply because it was the primitive form of baptism. The reviewer's copy (the only one, he hopes) was marred by the omission of pp. 65, 68, 69, 72 and the duplication of pp. 66, 67, 70 and 71.