

Reviews

Leonard Hodgson: *The Bible and the Training of the Clergy*.
95 pp. 12s. 6d. Darton, Longman and Todd.

This is a welcome addition to the comparatively small number of books devoted to the training of the clergy of the Church of England. It is all the more welcome since its author, formerly Regius Professor of Moral and Pastoral Theology in Oxford, has derived from much practical experience a sound understanding of the problems involved. His book, of course, will be especially interesting to members of his own Church, but it will also interest those in Churches of other traditions, who, as they are occupied with the training of candidates for the Christian ministry, are confronted by similar problems.

The book consists of four chapters which may perhaps have originally been four separate papers; the first two are headed "The Way We Live Now" and "Where Do We Go From Here?" the third, "Biblical Theology." Special Training for ordinands is of fairly recent origin; by a coincidence it was introduced during the period in which the historical and literary study of the Bible developed. Biblical criticism is the root of some of the most difficult problems involved in ministerial training. Theological students are obliged to spend a great deal of time in what can only be regarded as antiquarian research; this kind of study is properly demanded of men who will be the exponents and defenders of a religion based upon an historical revelation, but there is a real danger that they will be too much concerned with history, and too little concerned with revelation. Let all students grasp the main features of the literary and historical study of the Bible and let the ablest among them be encouraged to specialise in it; what they all need even more, is to know the body of theological propositions expressing the faith which discovers in Scripture the Word of God. They must learn how to interpret Scripture by the theological canons transmitted and expressed by the authoritative formularies accepted by the various Churches.

Men of sufficient ability can be trusted to examine the foundations of faith for themselves and these in due course will doubtless give themselves in the course of their ministries to specialist theological research. Most theological students, however, will become general practitioners rather than specialists and need a different training.

The last chapter is devoted to a discussion of the General Ordi-

nation Examination and of the Central Advisory Council on Training for the Ministry. Dr. Hodgson urges as a general criticism of the present method of ministerial training that "it prescribes for all candidates a scholarly type of curriculum and requires of those whose gifts are pastoral rather than intellectual that they shall do less of it and do it worse." Some experiments are suggested, one of which involves the substitution for a written examination of a series of essays and marks awarded to a student to indicate progress in his study of a given subject.

Baptist theological colleges usually have two groups of students—men working for a University degree and at the same time receiving special training and instruction for the Baptist ministry; men not working for a University degree though they generally attend the same lectures as the men who are, and, of course, receiving the same special ministerial training. The demands of the University curriculum and the demands of pastoral training which will fit a man to exercise an effective ministry in the modern world are as distracting to teachers in our own colleges as they evidently are to teachers in colleges belonging to other churches.

G. J. M. PEARCE

A. Gilmore (ed.): *The Pattern of the Church: A Baptist View*. 176 pp. 21s. Lutterworth Press.

Recent books of theological significance written by Baptists are, like American astronauts, a small but growing number. This latest volume in the progression has been launched into an ecclesiastical sky that is hardly cloudless, and my only fear for it is that it may be ignored, lost sight of or forgotten by those who most need to plot its course with assiduous care. It is within the competence of our denomination to recover it safely from the orbit of publication in the rescue areas of fraternal, church meetings and association assemblies; and to check, confirm and apply its findings. For its data, patiently assembled and lucidly expounded, are medicine for our healing; but only if we do more than read the label on the bottle.

That, however, raises the question of the readers for whom it is intended. The book is avowedly written to be released from exclusively Baptist moorings so that it may sail into other denominational ports. And indeed it should, for it carries ecumenical riches. Of the five chapters, the last is easily the shortest, compressing into a dozen pages of print a wealth of clarity and wisdom, eloquence and discernment on the subject of church reunion. It expresses the unanimous judgment of all four contributors to the volume, and for this reason stands without any author's name attached. (But no reader should find much difficulty in saying whodunit.) "The

Church in the New Testament" by S. F. Winward and "The Fulness of the Church of God" by N. Clark are biblical and theological studies forming chapters two and three which will command attention on every hand, and not least for their exposition of "ministry."

The remaining chapters—"Baptist Church Life Today" by W. M. S. West and "Baptist Churches Today and Tomorrow" by A. Gilmore—stand first and fourth respectively in the book and are, as their titles suggest, more domestic by nature. It was in the reading of these, and especially of the first, that the question of destination was raised in my mind. From Dr. West's essay, so it seems to me, emerges an enquiry about the nature of denominational self-portraiture for the benefit of others who are thus bidden to "peer through the windows into the Baptist world." Now and then he has clicked a candid camera, and its exposures are developed and printed without being enlarged. In other places, although he has not attempted to disguise the fact that the two sides of the denominational face are not identical, he has produced a painted picture rather than a photograph. Those invited to look through the windows will find no frosted glass blurring their vision; they will see us, warts and all. This is far from being a criticism of content: it is an enquiry about intention. All the characters of the book interlock, for it is a piece of group thinking. Would it not have been better in the Foreword to say plainly that the whole book is the window through which to see Baptist church life today and that chapters one and four are the points at which eavesdroppers are invited to listen with sympathy to a family conversation?

For us of the same faith and order as the authors the book as a whole is a dire necessity. Which brings us back to where we began. With their aid we must look at ourselves, not to go away and at once forget what we look like but to listen to this prophetic word and act upon it. The Church lives by the Word of God spoken once for all in Jesus Christ, and he is the essential form of the Church. If then we are a community confessing formation in Christ and striving after it, acknowledging the authority of the Bible and seeking obedience to it, caring for the unity of the Church of God and desiring it ardently in and with denominational reform, there are certain matters in urgent need of attention.

The first is liturgy, where, as Mr. Clark writes, "all roads lead at last" and "the heart of the Church is unveiled." An increasing awareness of this need is already present among us, and recent years have witnessed many attempts at improvement. Mr. Gilmore reminds us that not all of them have been wise. The issues at stake are not dignity and beauty: they are the realities of Order and ministry, the work of the people of God. The second is ministry,

where we must have clear understanding of the work of the "special" or ordained ministry, and equally clear conviction about the pattern of the Church. Mr. Winward's exposition is the starting-point: "That the Church has ministers is secondary, that the Church is ministry is primary." The third is polity, and the authority proper to local church, association, synod and national assembly.

This book is a quartet, presenting, developing and recapitulating these major themes within the immediate ecumenical context. Coherent in structure, compelling in argument and profoundly satisfying in nearly all its detail, it deserves an enthusiastic welcome.

MAURICE F. WILLIAMS

R. L. Child: *A Conversation About Baptism*. 104 pp. 6s. S.C.M.

Into 75 pages Mr. Child has compressed a history and theology of baptism, with traditional Baptist emphases, using Socius as his mouthpiece and Homo as interrogator. That so much is offered in so few pages deserves our gratitude rather than regret that so many points remain undeveloped. These chapters should be read by some in our open membership churches who have not taken seriously enough the call to baptism. In the last chapter baptism and church unity are discussed but without the way ahead becoming clearer. Because "paedo-baptists and anti-paedo-baptists have reached the stage today of recognising each other's Christian standing" (p. 93), it is suggested (p. 98) that "the standing rule of the Church . . . that anyone baptized in infancy may not be baptized again later on" might be waived in individual cases for the sake of liberty of conscience. "The bishop . . . might be empowered to permit the person concerned to apply for immersion to the minister of a church which does not recognize paedo-baptism as valid" (p. 100). But this is to deny recognition to the paedo-baptists' doctrine of the church at the very point where he demands it.

That this book will supply a need is certain, but it demonstrates another. Here, Homo is unpersuaded of the need for baptism. Had he spoken as a convinced paedo-baptist the dialogue would have been different, sharper, more typical of today's discussions. Is it too much to hope that Mr. Child will put us further in his debt by giving us such a book? We might then have a cover more illustrative of true dialogue than the present one.

D. H. SPARKES

R. P. Martin (ed.): *Vox Evangelica II*. 80 pp. 6s. Epworth Press.

The first issue of *Vox Evangelica* was published last year and this second issue contains five essays by members of the faculty of the

London Bible College, covering a fairly wide field. The longest essay, by the editor, deals with "Aspects of Worship in the New Testament Church" and examines the hymns of the New Testament with a more detailed study of I Timothy III : v. 16. "Recent Literature on the Acts of the Apostles" by D. Guthrie reveals how much research has been done on this book in the last nine years. The three shorter essays, "Legalism : An Essay on the Views of Dr. Emil Brunner," "What is Meant by Religious Experience?" and "The Theology of the Christian Mission" are by E. F. Kevan, H. D. McDonald and J. Savage respectively. The authors' viewpoint is conservative but other views are stated fully and fairly, and this volume is both informative and stimulating.

GEORGE FARR

E. H. Robertson : *Christians Against Hitler*. 136 pp. 6s. 6d. S.C.M.

The stand taken by the Confessing Church against Nazism is surely one of the most heroic episodes in modern church history. In the early 1940s many Christians were both thrilled and humbled by the tribute which Einstein paid to these men for offering the resistance for which he looked in vain to University professors and journalists in the best liberal tradition. Rev. E. H. Robertson has rendered a service in setting out this story so clearly and concisely. His work with the British Control Commission gave him the opportunity to unravel many of the details, especially concerning leaders who were put to death.

As is well-known, the late Bishop of Chichester, Dr. G. K. A. Bell, saw the Confessing Church as one of the very few rays of light in the darkness. He therefore left no stone unturned, not only before but during the war, to let Christians in other lands know of this resistance to Nazism. Dr. Bell's meeting with Bonhoeffer in Stockholm in 1942 and the refusal of the British Government to consider the peace feelers then put out are rightly treated at some length and make one reflect on what might have been.

K. C. DYKES

The Friends of Reunion are to be congratulated on their new publication, *Reunion Record*, edited now by Christopher Driver. Those who have found the older Bulletins useful should find this even more so. The first issue discusses relationships between Anglican and Methodists, and Daniel Jenkins writes on *Honest to God*. In the next number we are promised an examination of obstacles to Congregational-Presbyterian union in Britain and reports on some recent new books by Roman Catholic authors in the light of the re-opening of the Vatican Council. The cost is 2s. 6d. per copy

(issued quarterly); it is free to members of the Friends of Union, but extra copies or occasional orders may be obtained from the Rev. H. F. Newell, Lyminster Vicarage, Littlehampton, Sussex.

Paperbacks. In this paperback age many old books as well as some recent ones are being re-issued in a new guise. We draw attention to the following :

John Oman : *Concerning the Ministry*. 13s. 6d. S.C.M. Cheap Edition.

John Baillie : *Our Knowledge of God*. 7s. 6d. Oxford Paperbacks, No. 67.

F. F. Bruce : *The English Bible*. 12s. 6d. University Paperbacks, Methuen.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Helmer Ringgren : *The Faith of the Psalmists*, 10s. 6d. S.C.M.

A. B. Come : *An Introduction to Barth's Dogmatics for Preachers*. 25s. S.C.M.

Gerhard Ebeling : *Word and Faith*. 45s. S.C.M.

T. W. Manson : *On Paul and John*. 13s. 6d. S.C.M.

Noel Palmer : *The Pattern of Life*. 16s. Darton, Longman & Todd.

Horton Davies : *Varieties of English Preaching 1900-1960*. 25s. S.C.M.

A. G. Hebert : *Apostle and Bishop*. 21s. Faber & Faber.

Gunther Bornkamm, Gerhard Barth & H. J. Held : *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew*. 40s. S.C.M.

S. Mowinckel, trans. D. R. Ap-Thomas : *The Psalms in Israel's Worship* (2 volumes). 70s. the set. Blackwell.

Kurt Aland, trans. Dr. G. R. Beasley-Murray : *Did the Early Church Baptize Infants?* 16s. S.C.M.