

Notices of Books.

Sunday Observance: An Argument and Plea for the Old English Sunday. By the Rev. F. MEYRICK, M.A., Rector of Blickling, and Non-Residentiary Canon of Lincoln. London: Skeffington and Son. Pp. xv, 213. Price 5s.

Canon Meyrick's most useful book is evidently written out of the fulness of his heart, as an antidote to some recent publications which represent Sunday to be merely an ecclesiastical festival. That the Lord's Day is an institution resting upon the authority of the Apostolic Church, the Jewish Sabbath having been abrogated, was maintained by Bishop Jeremy Taylor. But the line he took differed widely from that adopted by various writers of the present day. "We do," he says in his "Rule and Exercises of Holy Living," "upon great reason comply with the Jewish manner of confessing the creation so far as it is instrumental to a real duty. We keep one day in seven, and so confess the manner and circumstances of the creation, and we rest also that we may tend holy duties." The modern writer who relegates to a supposed priestly code of late date the account of the seventh day in Genesis and denies the authenticity of the narrative occupies another position altogether. We sympathize with the just indignation of the author of this volume at the flippancy with which the whole subject is treated by the members of a certain school. Canon Meyrick traces back the institution to a Sabbatical law given by God at the beginning of the world, binding on all men conscious of His revelation. The law contained in the Fourth Commandment binds the Christian Church, but has now to be interpreted spiritually instead of literally, as a living principle of conduct enthroned in the heart. Part of the book consists of an historical survey relating to the Christian observance of the Lord's Day from primitive times down to the period of the Reformation, and followed by a catena of passages from English divines. The question of Sunday amusements is dealt with in a long chapter of great interest and importance. Avowed secularists act consistently in endeavouring to break down the barriers, but this can hardly be said of their professedly Christian allies, and Canon Meyrick's criticisms on some of their very illogical utterances are marked by much quiet humour. In support of his plea for the old English Sunday, he quotes the testimonies of Archbishop Benson, Lord Selborne, Miss Yonge, and others. Lord Selborne's—which extends over ten pages—is an elaborate statement of the reasons for his action in Parliament when opposing the Sunday opening of national institutions. It will well repay careful perusal. Our experience is that many people who are anxious to defend or promote the observance of Sunday do not know where to go for facts and arguments; they will find here what they want.

The English Church from the Accession of Charles I. to the Death of Anne (1625-1714). By the Rev. WILLIAM HOLDEN HUTTON, B.D., Fellow, Tutor, and Prælector of St. John's College, Oxford, Examining Chaplain to the Bishop of Ely. London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd. Pp. ix, 368. Price 7s. 6d.

This is the sixth volume of the new "History of the English Church" in course of publication by Messrs. Macmillan. The fifth, in which Mr. Walter Frere is to tell the story of the reigns of Elizabeth and James I., has not yet made its appearance, but may be expected shortly. From the historical point of view the Elizabethan period fully equals the Caroline in importance and interest, if not actually surpassing it, yet for most people the latter possesses a greater attraction. It is the one period in the annals of the Church of England which is enveloped by a halo of romance. Poetry and sentiment have cast a charm over it. Its *dramatis personæ* are familiar names to thousands who know nothing of the less picturesque, but not less able and devoted, Churchmen of a preceding generation. In his narrative of the ninety years following the accession of Charles I., Mr. Hutton has had a wealth of material ready to his hand. The histories of Clarendon and Burnet, to say nothing of later writers, such as Dr. Gardiner and Lord Macaulay, cover between them the whole of the time embraced in this volume. Evelyn's "Diary" all but covers it, while the mass of contemporary memoirs, journals, controversial literature, and State Papers, is almost overwhelming. Under such circumstances the difficulties of selection and arrangement are considerable, but Mr. Hutton has successfully seized upon the salient points and given us a very interesting book. His study of the period is, on the whole, marked by much fairness. In a chapter on "The Church and the Clergy before the Civil Wars" he draws attention to some forgotten facts, describing the amount of quiet religious work that was going on below the surface, and the narrowness of the division in spiritual things between different sections of Churchpeople. He speaks highly of Puritanism at its best as "a powerful, and in many respects a righteous, force," encouraging a stern simplicity, and remarks that "much that was beautiful as well as strong in later English life was not a little due" to households trained on its principles. It is sometimes the fashion to represent the loyal devotion to the Church manifested by so many of her children during the Commonwealth time as the result of Laud's influence. Its growth is shown in these pages to be of much earlier date, and traceable to other sources. The truth is that no small number of those who suffered under the Protectorate disapproved of the policy which had involved Church and King in a common overthrow.

Charles I. is dealt with here rather severely. Whatever his political offences may have been, we do not think that the troubles in the Church can be laid at his door. Mr. Hutton, while admitting the violence of Laud's methods, considers that his aims were realized to a large extent even in the few years while he was in power. He credits the Archbishop

with having "seen clearly where the dividing-line lay," for his measures "made it clear to Englishmen that a rigid Calvinism and a Presbyterian hierarchy were alike inconsistent with the principles of the Church of England." The conclusion arrived at corresponds more or less with the view expressed in the epigrammatic phrase that Laud found the Church fluid and left it solid. But the illegalities perpetrated by the High Commission Court, and the contempt for law of which Clarendon complains, arousing the hatred of almost the whole legal profession, are passed over far too lightly by the author; neither do we share his apparent admiration for Archbishop Neile of York. The concise account of the interregnum makes very good reading, and contains a useful sketch of the religious system then set up, with remarks on Cromwell's theory of liberty of conscience. He looked for "the formation of a federated religious body which should be Puritan in its essential principles, excluding English Churchmen and Romanists, and should labour under State control to advance the righteousness of the people." The events of the last two Stuart reigns have been so often described that little room is left for a fresh treatment of them, and the most important portions of the latter half of the book are those relating to Church affairs between 1688 and 1714. Of the Nonjurors too favourable a picture is drawn. The Comprehension Bill and the proposals for Prayer-Book revision in 1689 are noticed at some length; but we fancy that Mr. Hutton has not seen the full text of the Comprehension Bill as printed by the Historical Manuscripts Commission in an appendix to their twelfth report. He has also devoted a separate chapter to the Convocation controversies which extended over several years, and the questions involved in these unseemly wrangles—some of them important ones—are explained with much care. Before Anne's death the romance and glamour of the Caroline period had begun to fade into the light of common day.

There are just a few points that call for friendly criticism. We do not think Mr. Hutton is correct in saying that the canons of 1640 appear to be still in force. The last section in the Statute of 1661 (13 Charles II., c. 12) was carefully worded; but its obvious effect was to annul those of the 1640 canons which related to ecclesiastical jurisdiction, or extended unconstitutionally the operation of the Penal Laws, and to put things back to the state they were in at the end of 1639. The cultivation of amicable relations with the Eastern Church, with which the Nonjurors are credited here, really began in the time of Charles I. The *Codex Alexandrinus* was given to the King by Cyril Lucar. Men like Isaac Basire, Bishop Morton's chaplain, and others who had served as chaplains in the Levant, took a keen interest in Eastern Christianity, and the Prayer-Book had been translated into Greek. In the paragraph on South, whose sermons have fallen nowadays into sad neglect, we should like to have seen a more adequate recognition of his great gifts. It is said that "he died a Canon of Christ Church, where, indeed, he had preferred to be." But he was Prebendary of Westminster as well as Canon of Christ Church, and it is at Westminster that he lies buried. One remarkable

incident should have received fuller notice. The case of Bishop Watson is almost the solitary instance of the deprivation of a Bishop by judicial sentence since the abolition of the High Commission Court, and the only one in which the questions of jurisdiction involved in such a proceeding were discussed in a court of law. The opinions pronounced by the judges have been handed down in the legal reports of the time. Mr. Hutton's too brief reference to Bishop Watson makes no allusion to these circumstances, and the omission of something like a summary of the particulars is to be regretted. Though it is only a trifling matter, we dislike the change in the spelling of our old friend Denis Granville's name. An improved index is also a desideratum. But as an introduction to the study of the eventful period with which it deals we would warmly commend this volume.

William Wilberforce: The Story of a Great Crusade. By TRAVERS BUXTON, M.A., Secretary of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. London: The Religious Tract Society. Pp. 187. 2s. 6d.

It is some time since such a thoroughly good popular biography made its appearance. Mr. Travers Buxton has given us not only a narrative of the long fight for the abolition of slavery, but a graphic sketch of the personality of the leader to whose untiring fortitude and patience the victory was largely due. Many of those who took an active part in the earlier stages of the struggle passed away before it ended. Wilberforce himself had the happiness of living just long enough to see the good cause triumph, receiving the news a week previously to his death. We are afraid that the present generation knows little about him, and Mr. Buxton has rendered a real service in resuscitating his memory. Wilberforce's surroundings, both in early and later life, are well described, as are also his religious and political opinions, and the various philanthropic enterprises in which he engaged. It is interesting to note that, besides being one of the earliest promoters of the Church Missionary and Bible Societies, he led the way in London hospital reform, and did much for the spread of education among the poor. To many readers the extracts from his correspondence, skilfully interwoven by Mr. Buxton with the narrative, will prove a source of attraction. These extracts, as remarkable for their mild wisdom as for their piety, relate to a number of subjects, public and personal. We observe amongst them a curious criticism on Gibbon, who is described as "coxcorn all over: but of great learning as well as very great show of it. He has the merit, also, of never declining a difficulty. But his style is abominably affected . . . and then his paganism is vastly more confirmed than that of Tully, or any other of the old school." There is much about Pitt and Burke, John Newton, the Milners, Hannah More, and some of Wilberforce's immediate allies in the campaign against slavery, including Granville Sharp and Clarkson. Mr. Buxton takes some pains to clear Clarkson from the charge made against him by Wilberforce's sons of depreciating their father's work in order to magnify his own, and shows the accusation to have been unjust.

The book contains a few good illustrations. We desire to draw attention to this truly excellent account of a great Christian patriot and benefactor of humanity, whose memory should be treasured by every Englishman.

Steps towards Christian Unity. By ARTHUR C. TURBERVILLE. London: Elliot Stock. Pp. xiii, 208.

The views on home reunion expressed in these pages are the views of a thoughtful Nonconformist who desires to see the attainment of a real and effective unity. Mr. Turberville thinks that the perpetuation of our divisions is due to inherited estrangements rather than to any vital divergence of faith, and the object of his book is to mediate between those who really believe alike, but seldom work or worship together. He discusses the points of agreement between the Church of England and orthodox Nonconformity, with an outline of a scheme which he considers might form a possible basis for intercommunion. The two chief deficiencies of the English Church are said to be a lack of Christian fellowship and a failure to recognise the rights of the laity. Efforts in the direction of reunion must, in Mr. Turberville's opinion, proceed in the first instance from the unofficial rank and file, and are not to be looked for from a body such as the Free Church Council, since the leaders of that organization are mainly occupied in the promotion of "sectional interests." Many interesting quotations bearing on the question are given, and the spirit in which the book is written is admirable. Its contents claim the notice of Churchpeople.

'Neath Palm and Pine. By A. G. PENNY. London: The Religious Tract Society. Pp. 63.

Our readers should note this extremely well-written description of missionary work in Indian villages in the neighbourhood of Gorakhpur. We gather from internal evidence that the writer is a lady. She tells her story in a straightforward and simple style, contriving to convey a very vivid idea of her surroundings. Pictures are given us of the daily routine at different times of the year, of work in the schools and the zenanas, and one chapter contains a bright account of a holiday in the Himalayas. The booklet is beautifully printed, but ought to have a more substantial cover.

The Church Navy: Thoughts on the Pioneer Work of the Church. By the Rev. CHARLES T. OVENDEN, D.D., Canon of St. Patrick's. London: S.P.C.K. Pp. xiv, 236.

The peculiar title of this volume affords little indication of the nature of its contents. It is a collection of plain sermons on different departments of parochial work and the obstacles most commonly encountered. Church choirs, education, interest in foreign missions, are amongst the subjects chosen. There are two very good addresses on moral cowardice and "The Unfair Critic." Canon Ovenden's observations are the outcome of a long pastoral experience, and he describes with accuracy a condition of things that may be found in many town and country parishes. His sermons, which are of the simplest description, are full of good sense and sound advice.