

## Notices of Books.

THE PAPAL QUESTION. By George Bayfield Roberts, Vicar of Elmstone.  
London: *Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons, Ltd.* Price 2s. 6d. net.

The above is one of a series of works called the "St. Paul's Handbooks," issued under the general supervision of Dr. E. Hermitage Day, F.S.A. The author is the Rev. George Bayfield Roberts, the historian of the English Church Union. We know, therefore, the camp from which this volume proceeds. Perhaps the two most meritorious characteristics of the school are the untiring way in which it pushes its principles by means of the Press, and the generous support which its adherents render mutually to each other by systematic recommendation of one another's books in the organs of the party from which the publications emanate. We have no doubt whatever that the book will have a good sale. Whether that sale will be altogether due to its merits or not is quite another question.

We have no quarrel with the object of the volume. It is a protest against the undue pretensions of the Papacy. Those pretensions are really the only point on which the English Church Union party have a quarrel with Rome. The protest now before us is neither strong nor clear, but it is a protest, after all. So far we may be thankful for it. But whether it is needed or not is very doubtful.

With the contents of the volume everyone acquainted with ecclesiastical history is perfectly familiar. And beside the learned works of "Father" Puller and Mr. Denny, there is the late Dr. Littledale's "Words for Truth," which deal with the subject briefly and clearly and far more effectively than the present work. There is a want of definiteness in the latter throughout, in spite of the fact that the salient points of the controversy are tolerably familiar to those who are acquainted with the subject. We must confess ourselves unable to discover precisely what sort of Primacy the author ascribes to Rome, or even precisely what Primacy he ascribes to St. Peter. Moreover, he does not clearly point out that, even if St. Peter enjoyed a Primacy over the other Apostles, there is no evidence that he had the power to transmit it to anyone else; still less, were that possible, that it was definitely transmitted *in perpetuum* to the Bishop of Rome. The famous passage of St. Cyprian, which, of course, Mr. Roberts quotes, appears to vest the Primacy over the Church in the whole Episcopate. It was a jurisdiction in which every individual Bishop had a share.

In one or two ways besides its dreary vagueness the volume is unsatisfactory. In the first place, though there are a great many quotations, hardly any references are given. In the next, all these passages are translated. This may be because the book is intended for persons who are not scholars. But we doubt whether unlearned persons will derive much benefit from the book. It is not clear enough for them. And one may easily, in a translation, give a wrong interpretation to a sentence. Then the author is very unsatisfactory in regard to the shameless interpolations introduced by the Roman party into Cyprian's "Epistles" and his treatise "De Unitate Ecclesiæ." He tells us, though with his usual vagueness, that the Benedictine editors of

the treatise "De Unitate" struck out the interpolations, though Cardinal Fleury, the famous ecclesiastical historian, afterwards insisted on their reinsertion. Father Ryder, Mr. Roberts goes on to say, admitted in 1881 that they were "spurious." If so notorious a controversialist as Father Ryder made the admission, one would think the question settled. But no. "Dom John Chapman" stood up for the genuineness of the passages in the "Revue Benedictine," and his arguments "appeared conclusive to Harnack, Hans von Soden, and many other scholars." The inverted commas are Mr. Roberts', not ours; but he does not tell us by whom the words he quotes were written.

On one other point Mr. Roberts is also unsatisfactory. He puts the argument from the celebrated passage in Irenæus ("Adv. Hær.," iii. 2) in a quaint and indefinite form. Its plain meaning is clearly that *because Rome was the capital (propter potiozem principalitatem)* "the whole Church found it necessary to resort thither (*convenire*)—that is to say, the faithful from all quarters; and that from this fact (*ab his qui sunt undique*) the tradition which is from the Apostles has been preserved." As an additional reason for respecting, not the authority, but the advantages possessed by the Church of Rome, Irenæus reminds his readers that the Apostles Peter and Paul appointed Linus to the Episcopate (in the sense in which the word is now understood), and that a succession of faithful Bishops had handed down the genuine tradition from the Apostles' time to that in which Irenæus was writing.

It is only fair to say that sometimes Mr. Roberts is explicit enough, as when he says that the Pope, in his Encyclical "Satis Cognitum," has "insinuated a sense" of his Patristic citations "which is at variance with explicit statements to the contrary made elsewhere by the writers cited"; and as when he claims for the Pope a Primacy not *jure divino*, but simply *jure ecclesiastico*. But he calls the imperious Stephen of Rome by the title of "Saint," which is a compliment Stephen does not deserve. And, like the Vaticanist divines, he complains of the bitterness and ill-temper of Firmilian, a predecessor of St. Basil the Great, instead of praising him for the boldness and vigour with which he denounces Stephen's autocratic action as dangerous not only to the peace of the Church, but to the principles of our holy religion.

JESUS IN THE NINETEETH CENTURY AND AFTER. By Professor Weinel and A. G. Widgery. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark. Price 10s. 6d. net.

This book is based on the German treatise of Professor Weinel, which has been translated by Mr. Widgery; but his services have gone far beyond that of a translator. The original work dealt with no French or English writers, save Renan and Oscar Wilde; but the present volume contains a very sufficient review of the attitude of French and English thinkers, and also of Mazzini, towards the Central Figure.

The authors take up a frankly naturalistic position with regard to our Lord; they criticize drastically (pp. 100, 101) the orthodox position, and avow themselves on the "Jesus" side in the "Jesus or Christ" controversy; and consequently much of their language is apt to grate upon the devout mind. But once that difficulty is overcome, the value of the book becomes

apparent, and its arguments are enhanced rather than weakened by the attitude of the writers; for they show how every great movement of the last century, as represented by its most prominent leaders, turned with respect and expectation to the Prophet of Nazareth.

After a review of the awakening of scientific thought, they deal with the rise of historical criticism. They then show how the leaders of Liberal reform in the earlier part of the century claimed our Lord as their inspiration. Modern social movements are next passed in review, of which almost all "have made appeal to Jesus, even those of Socialism"; the last phrase betrays a Continental origin, for English Socialism has not been so hostile to religion as to merit this distinction: Robert Blatchford's denunciations of religion are better known than his appreciation of Christ (p. 250). Nietzsche's outburst against Christianity is traced to a false conception of our Lord as a mere preacher of self-renunciation. After a sketch of the progress of religious thought, the book concludes with a deservedly severe rebuke to those unhistoric critics who are attempting to explain away the Person to whom these historic facts are due.

Such a brief outline of the plan of the book will show that it is a very arsenal of apologetics; for the facts enumerated by the authors are capable of another interpretation than that which they have drawn from them. Can the One who, after eighteen centuries, has so influenced the leaders of one of the formative periods of the world's history, One so many-sided that men of the most opposite convictions have claimed Him as sanctioning their ideals—can that One have been mere man? If the position of the writers is one of "reduced Christianity," their book at any rate goes far to testify against their inadequate interpretation of its Subject.

M. LINTON SMITH.

**MYSTICISM AND THE CREED.** By the Rev. W. F. Cobb, D.D. London; *Macmillan and Co.* Price 10s. 6d. net.

The Mystic's craving for immediacy of experience commands the sympathy of every Christian who believes in the Holy Ghost. His operation in the heart is vain unless definite experiences accompany the new birth and frequently sustain the spiritual life. But all such experiences must be sifted by the Reason before they can be made a basis for philosophy, for the fact and its interpretation become involved in the recipient's intelligence. "When God desires to communicate some truth to a prepared soul, He explores the depths of its mind, where all sorts of intellectual treasures lie hid, ready to be called into use by the Imagination touched by the Divine Spirit" (p. 138). For the removal of error and self-deception this revelation must be subjected to a rational analysis which can estimate its proper worth.

To this process Mysticism will not submit. Dr. Cobb regards the age as "the inheritor of the traditions of two or three generations of men who worshipped Reason fondly, and put out their eyes as a sacrifice to their goddess" (p. 315). "The somewhat arrogant claim to regard Reason exclusively or principally as the one instrument by which we escape from Nature to Nature's God is a claim which can but arouse other powers in the

soul to make active protest" (p. 32). Reason is not an exclusive guide, or we could never appeal to Faith. But where its light is clear, it must suffice. We may compare Reason to the sun, and Faith to the stars (p. 242); but it is wrong to say that "when one sets the others rise." The light of the sun by its intensity overrules that from the stars. We must follow Reason as far as it can conduct us. Otherwise our language, which is the vehicle by which rational thought is conveyed from mind to mind, must become unintelligible. From this the Mystic does not shrink. "A grammar, a lexicon, and a history are no doubt valuable aids to the interpretation of the Bible, but they are as a microscope to a blind man unless they are used by the man whose spiritual eye is opened" (p. 230). Even our Lord's words are "paradoxical, as all truths of the spiritual life are, because every such truth transcends logic, and therefore when expressed in terms of logic is at once essentially true and apparently false" (p. 207). On this theory speech is useless for evangelistic purposes, and our Risen Lord's great commission to His Church was a profound mistake. For if the preacher uses words in their ordinary significance, he suppresses the truth; and if otherwise, how can men understand? It can never be safe to despise Reason.

Mysticism relies upon the authority of Symbolism. The assertion that all nature is symbolic of ultimate truth may be allowed to the poet, but not to the philosopher. The function of symbol is illustrative, not demonstrative. It explains, but does not prove, facts. The symbols which Dr. Cobb adduces are often very beautiful; but those from the use of numbers in the Holy Scriptures are quite arbitrary, and some from the teachings of the natural sciences are positively erroneous. In all there is too much fancy for conclusive argument. When the statements of the Creed are interpreted as merely symbolic of eternal verities, an indifference to their historicity is engendered, the foundations of Christian evidence are broken, and the spiritual truth remains unproved. All revelation must be empirically imparted, or Agnosticism is justified.

There is so little common ground upon which argument between us can be based that we shall not attempt to dispute in detail Dr. Cobb's contentions. Disparaging Reason and exalting Symbolism, he has himself much difficulty in claiming a rightful position in the Church of England (pp. 44-52). Should he not become a Plymouth Brother? Greek thought and mythology are regarded as the ultimate source of Christianity, and especially of the doctrines of our Lord. Lip-service is rendered to the transcendence of God, but Mysticism is essentially pantheistic. Our Lord is no more Divine than was Socrates (p. 104), and His perfection was the outcome of the "purifying process of many lives" (p. 239). The sinlessness impugned, the Atonement vanishes. The doctrine of the previous existences of men, and their frequent incarnations, is accurately described in the words which Dr. Cobb applies to theosophy—that they are "luminous mists of speculation which conceal the absence of a bridge between God and the world by diverting the spectator's attention from both sides of the chasm alike" (p. 100); for, looking backwards, they never bring us to a First Cause, and forward they never bring us one step nearer to eternity.

We put the book down with a deep conviction of the utter inadequacy of

Mysticism as a philosophy, of its contradiction of Christianity in form and in substance, and of its inefficiency as a gospel to meet the needs of human nature. We turn from it more content than ever to walk in the "old paths."

E. ABBEY TINDALL.

THE SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHY as affording a Key to the Solution of Some of the Problems of Evolution. By the Rev. J. Gurnhill, B.A. London: Longmans, Green and Co. Price 7s. 6d. net.

Mr. Gurnhill has provided an interesting book dealing in a scholarly and up-to-date manner with the problems of modern scientific thought. The treatment is too brief to carry conviction to a materialist or sceptic, but it offers a useful guidance to those who are beginning to see their way through initial difficulties and to accept a spiritual basis of philosophy as essentially true. The time has not yet come when philosophy can present a simple solution of the mysteries of the universe, but every endeavour carries us a little further. Our greatest need is a more accurate definition of terms. It is not always easy to ascertain whether Mr. Gurnhill uses the word "evolution" of the change wrought in two successive phenomena by forces inherent in the earlier, or of a mere progression in time. Nor would many writers speak of the Holy Spirit as a "percept" while regarding the idea of God as a "concept," though certainly the "concept" from one experience may become as a "percept" when used as a *datum* for further reflection. Next, a more careful delineation of the boundaries of the respective provinces of Reason and Faith, with the methods of exploration which are possible in each, is a *desideratum* in those who do not deny the possibility of a Revelation. There is a danger of ignoring an insufficiency of evidence for statements which demand a rational support, and undue hesitation in reference to the contents of belief. Thus, Mr. Gurnhill claims for either an importance as an ultimate reality which is far from demonstrated, and thinks that "Nature herself has been the first great teacher of religion," in a sense which almost precludes, though he does not intend it, a Personal Deity and Divine communications to man. He is undoubtedly right when he says, "It is not civilization or religion only that is at 'the cross-roads'; philosophy is in the same position of uncertainty." We are ready for the fearless assertion of the spiritual experiences of religion and the faithful ascription of their cause to God Himself.

PHILOSOPHY. WHAT IS IT? By F. B. Jevons, Litt.D., Professor of Philosophy in the University of Durham. Cambridge University Press. Price 1s. 6d. net.

This is an excellent little book, containing five lectures delivered to one of the branches of the Workers' Educational Association in response to a desire to know what philosophy is. Dr. Jevons, with full regard to the character of his audience, adopts a simple style which never employs a difficult word, and does not shrink from a needful repetition to keep his points clearly before the mind. Naturally, his scope was limited; we trust that in the near future he will supplement these lectures by others, similar in purpose, discussing the leading systems of philosophy, of which here he mentions only that of Hume. Dr. Jevons maintains that philosophy is practical;

and, by thoroughly sound reasoning, shows how we are impelled from experience to the conclusions that "God is, and that in His will, and in doing His will, our good and the only good consists"; that "God alone is not separated from reality by appearances, but is Himself the reality, and the source of the reality, that He alone knows as it really is"; and that "we can, if we will, do His will, and draw near to Him both in our hearts and in our actions. But to draw near to Him, we must love Him with all our heart and with all our soul, and must love our neighbour as ourself. So far as we do that, we are acting up to our philosophy, are putting our philosophy into practice, and are practical philosophers." Such theism will go far to counteract the materialistic tendencies of the day.

ENGLISH CHURCH LIFE FROM THE RESTORATION TO THE TRACTARIAN MOVEMENT. By J. Wickham Legg, LL.D. London: *Longmans, Green and Co.* Price 12s. 6d. net.

As Dr. Legg's book has a somewhat polemical flavour about it, a review of it can hardly be expected to avoid polemics altogether. But they will not be of a serious nature. Though Dr. Legg's object is clearly to show that the Tractarian movement is only the outcome of the previous history of the Church of England, he is almost always conspicuously fair. And no one can deny that he has a wide knowledge of the literature of the period with which he deals. The book is a little ponderous. Nearly 430 pages devoted to its subject, under fourteen heads, is perhaps a little more than is needed. We cannot even find space for an enumeration of the subjects treated. Among them are "The Eucharist and Daily Prayers," "Manners and Customs among Church-folk," "Church Seasons," "Discipline and Penance," and "The Eucharistic Vestments." But these are treated almost exclusively from the High Church standpoint. Of the doings of Low or Broad Churchmen we hear very little.

We are thoroughly in accord with the author in his belief that the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were not so bad as they are painted. It is the simplest commonplace to say that what calls itself the "Catholic party" has persistently exaggerated the badness of the times before the "Catholic Revival" took place, the inference being how necessary and how inestimable that "Revival" was, and how superior the religious tone of the country has been in consequence of it. Dr. Legg's volume disposes of this idea altogether. He cites Dean Church to the contrary. From "The Pious Parishioner" we learn that weekly Communion was to be found at "many" churches in the eighteenth century. Evelyn is cited to show that on October 7, 1688, Dr. Tenison administered Holy Communion to "near 1,000 people," and Whitefield as stating that he administered it to 1,000 people at "St. Bartholomew's Church" (whether in London or elsewhere is not stated) in 1748. Dr. Legg proves that early Communion was by no means uncommon between 1700 and 1810. Nor was fasting Communion. But it was not represented by any high authority to be a "mortal sin" to break one's fast before receiving, as is often done now, and Dr. Legg admits this. Daily prayers were said in a great number of churches, and many lay folk made a point of attending them twice a day.

Dr. Legg does not tell us that John Wesley once found 400 people gathered together in Exeter Cathedral at 6 a.m. on an ordinary week-day. Even the "Catholic Revival" has altogether failed to produce such commendable devotion as this. We are next told, though it is very well known, that some clergy of our Church in times long past held what are now called "extreme" views on the Presence in the Eucharist. Dr. Legg does not inform us that these were simply the private opinions of individuals. It does not seem to have occurred to anyone in those days to represent such views as necessary Catholic truth, binding on the conscience. Some latitude has always been permitted to individual opinion in our Church on such points. Nor can it be too clearly understood that it is the attempt to lay down as necessary truths the conclusions of the Schoolmen which causes such bitter controversy among us at this moment. Dr. Legg, by the way, shows his own independence by maintaining that to say the Ante-Communion Office when there is no celebration has good "Catholic" authority. No practice has been more bitterly and coarsely assailed by the "Catholic Revivalist" than this. It has become known as "Table Prayers," and the writer of this review once heard a "Catholic" priest denounce the practice as downright wicked. But we cannot follow Dr. Legg further. Before parting with him, however, we cannot refrain from expressing our regret that so honest and fair-minded a man as he evidently is has found himself unable to conquer his prejudice in favour of the Eucharistic vestments so far as to admit the facts that for two generations after the Revision of 1662 *no attempt whatever* was made to reintroduce these vestments into the services of the Church.

**EFFECTUAL WORDS OR SERMONS THAT LED TO CHRIST.** Edited, with Introduction and Review, by John Reid, M.A., Inverness. London: *James Clarke and Co.* Price 3s. 6d. net.

Sermons selected for publication are often chosen with a view to their eloquence, their literary merit, or, it may be, their presentation of certain views or theories. These, however, are set before us for the most practical of all reasons—*viz.*, that God has set His seal upon them and blessed them to the conversion of souls.

A list is given of the preachers, nineteen in all, but the order of the sermons does not agree with that of the contributors, so that with the exception of two or three cases we cannot know with certainty who the particular preacher is, the object being to glorify, not man, but God, and to make those invited to contribute more free to do so without feeling that they were advertising themselves.

Among the preachers of these nineteen sermons may be mentioned such prominent names as Canon W. H. M. H. Aitken, Prebendary F. S. Webster, Dr. Monro Gibson, Dr. F. B. Meyer, Professor Stalker, and the late General Booth. The whole list is a very catholic and representative one.

In his introduction and review, which prefaces the book, the editor shows us upon what plan he worked, what kind of replies he received, and what conclusions may be drawn from his effort. In addition to this, we have before each sermon some account of the manner and circumstances in which God had made it a blessing to souls, these narratives being mostly, if not altogether, in the words of the authors themselves. One preacher, speaking

of bringing souls to Christ, says: "He has discovered that his most effective sermons from this point of view are not such as he would have selected for publication. They are rather those in which he has striven to present simply the deep Evangelical truths of sin and redemption."

"One minor fact," Mr. Reid tells us, "deserves notice. In the majority of instances where men and women have been influenced by the sermons it was when the preacher was in another pulpit than his own, or when the hearer had been a visitor in the church." This is surely a strong argument for a greater exchange of pulpits.

We heartily congratulate the editor on the carrying out of his scheme, and trust the work will have a wide circulation. It should be an invaluable help to preachers, showing what method of address God has most used. We almost wonder that more has not been attempted in this direction before, and hope this effort may pave the way for others on the same plan.

A LETTER TO ASIA. By the Ven. F. B. Westcott. London: *Macmillan and Co.* Price 3s. 6d. net.

The clergy are continually being told to study, and to study the Bible. Archdeacon Westcott's little book on the Epistle to the Colossians is the very thing to help them so to do. With this and his Greek Testament side by side, a man will find the best possible food both for mind and spirit; and to go through the Epistle slowly, with this book as a guide, is excellent Bible study, devotional and intellectual. We like the bold "unfettered" rendering which is given and explained. Every Greek phrase is examined, and its meaning set out in plain and attractive English. Here is scholarship along with deepest reverence and loving trust in Christ Jesus as the Saviour of sinners. Far more delightful, and in many ways far more useful, than an ordinary commentary. An excellent gift book to a clerical friend.

THE MARTYR OF STOCKHOLM. By August Strindberg. Translated from the Swedish by the Rev. Claud Field, M.A. London: *Chas. J. Thynne.* Price 6d.

A most touching narrative, throwing light upon a portion of the Reformation in its early beginnings little known, as it should be, in this country. Many who can trace out the growth of Protestantism in England, Germany, Switzerland, or the Netherlands, or have followed it as far as it went in France, Spain, and Italy, know but little of the struggle in Sweden, Norway, or Denmark. Such people should welcome this little work, and feel grateful to Mr. Field for presenting it to us in our own language. Cast apparently in the form of a tale—at least, so much so as to clothe the record with flesh and blood and make it throb with life—the story shows us how a brave servant of God, about the time of the invention of printing, was arrested and at last burned at the stake through the efforts of those whose worldly interests kept them from being as true to their convictions as he was to his. The flame of his burning, however, spread, and kindled a conflagration in which many of those perished themselves who had hounded him to death.

The story is well worth reading, and we trust it will have the wide circulation which it deserves.