

Notices of Books.

THE GOSPEL MIRACLES. By J. R. Illingworth, M.A., D.D. London : *Macmillan and Co.* Price 4s. 6d. net.

Readers of this book will the more regret that the pen of the author has been laid aside with his removal from earthly labour. This is his last word to us, and for many it will be the last word in a great and stubborn controversy. Reason and Faith are reconciled. Science and Philosophy no longer offer resistance to the Gospel miracles.

The time has long passed when discussion centred on the sufficiency of the evidence or the credibility of the historians. The weakness of this line of argument, and the transference of the debate from science to philosophy, are perceived in Hume's assertion that "a miracle is a violation of the laws of nature ; and as a firm and unalterable experience has established the laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined. . . . It is contrary to experience that a miracle should be true, but not contrary to experience that testimony should be false." But this position is indefensible when we reflect that experience is not a capable judge in this matter, for in Christ a new and unique fact has entered the world, transcending all human experience.

The possession of a free-will is so embedded in man's consciousness that its denial strikes at the root of all knowledge. We may at once abandon hope of discovering Truth. Dr. Illingworth opens with the startling paradox that "Necessity (is) the basis of freedom." The fixity of natural law is the revelation of Divine consistency. Violation of law is only subjected to the restraint that both breach and continuity must work in harmony with the definite purpose which is gradually being wrought out. As a creature, man is endowed with personal freedom, yet he also is under the law. "We can only play our game of chess because the several pieces have a constant value." In the wilful exercise of liberty man has sinned, and the whole creation is involved in the immense catastrophes which invariably follow the lapse of law. We cannot be too thankful to Dr. Illingworth for his repeated and powerful insistence that sin is a great fact. If miracle is a violation of law, sin is the "only miracle," a real breach of the moral law. It is the loving intention of an all-holy God to obtain its removal, and the remedy of its consequent woes.

The Incarnation is a new creative fact. It is an event altogether new, and not to be tested by canons of criticism gathered from ordinary experience. The claims of our Lord are abundantly corroborated by the anticipations of the Hebrew prophets and the accomplished work of His Church. The Virgin Birth, the Resurrection, and all the miracles of the Gospel, are found upon examination to entirely accord with the revelation of Divine Love operating for the salvation of man and his restoration to a true life. If ordinary experience counts for little, the experience of Christians counts for much. Not the least valuable part of Dr. Illingworth's contribution is his method of estimating Christian experience at its true worth, and in-

identally, in the last chapter, he displays its worth in the settlement of the questions evoked by the literary criticism of the Holy Scriptures.

This brief and inadequate outline of Dr. Illingworth's argument may be helpful in turning some who are still perplexed to a real source of help, carefully unfolded, clearly expressed, and fully persuasive.

THE CHURCH IN THE MODERN STATE. By Frederick Rogers. London: *Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons, Ltd.* Price 2s. 6d. net.

The war has added to the interest of both spiritual and ecclesiastical problems, and this fact makes the issue of Mr. Rogers' handbook most timely. We all want to know something about the religious systems of our friends and of our foes, who are nearly all, at least nominally, Christian. We all are anxious that the name of Christ should not be dishonoured by the warfare of Christian nations, and some of us may be anxious to see Protestant principles vindicated rather than Roman.

Mr. Rogers presents us with a sketch of the religious life of the European States. Though in close sympathy with the Labour Movement, he is a keen advocate of Establishment and a defender of the Church of England. He makes no secret of the fact that his sympathies lie with the High Church party, and for all he says, the Church might be Evangelical in neither her standards nor her membership. He is, however, quite fair to Continental Protestants.

In the opening chapter Mr. Rogers enunciates a theory of a Church in the Modern State. Men must organize, and the largest forms of social organization have to do with religion and with nationality. No nation is without an organized expression of its spiritual beliefs, and such organization is designed to fight the defects and failures of human life. Organized religion stands for that side of human nature which refuses to be content with the merely material. A State Church is the application of the Socialist theory to organized religion, and religious machinery, though insufficient by itself, provides the means for that expression of religious conviction, which will reconcile sanctity, intellect, and authority.

National Churches arose mainly out of the Reformation conflict, but that need not detract from their value, because there were national Churches in the early centuries of Christianity, some of which still remain. They, however, says Mr. Rogers, had nothing Protestant about them, yet the Protestant schism was far more justifiable than the schism of the Greek Church.

In his chapter on "Theories of Church and State," Mr. Rogers reviews Erastus, Calvin, Zwingli, Luther, Arminius, Hooker, Bacon, Jeremy Taylor, and Hobbes. In discussing Calvin, he says that he was "perhaps the greatest man in Europe while he lived, who cut his way through the controversial jungle, established by sheer force of genius a Church of his own, and saved Protestantism from ruin. No one knew exactly what was meant by Protestantism, even the redoubtable John Knox was not equal to a definition when challenged." This we beg leave to doubt. Surely the essential principle of Protestantism was expressed in connection with the famous protest of 1529.

There follow sketches of the religious life of Austria; Belgium, "the most Catholic country in Europe"; Denmark, where "services are irreverent

and formal, and [religion] is all but powerless against the national vice of drink"; France, where the Roman Church may be suffering for its "pitiless persecutions of Protestantism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries"; Germany, where with the law that each child of fourteen shall have a right to decide on its religion, "it is little wonder . . . that religion in Germany decays"; Greece; Holland; Italy; Norway; Portugal, where the Church has fallen on evil days, but is reaping what it has sown; Russia, where "ritual is a tremendous power in the faith," and "the priests are not more sober than their flock," though perhaps with the prohibition of vodka the criticism will cease to hold; Spain, which "reflects the romance, the gloom, and the mystery of the Roman Catholic Church"; Sweden, where "no civil disabilities attach to any person on account of his religious opinions, except to the Jesuits"; Switzerland, where the same holds good.

The Church of England has a chapter to itself. Mr. Rogers quotes the provision of Magna Carta that the Church of England shall be free. He states that "Episcopacy is Divinely instituted and is also beyond question the best form of Church government discovered yet." He rather begs the question, though he does not go so far as to say that episcopacy is of the *esse* of the Church. Mr. Rogers testifies to the vitality of the doctrine of Apostolical Succession, and he says that Keble's Assize Sermon in 1833 "was a battle-cry for a larger liberty than could be found in a Protestantism dominated by the utilitarian theories of Paley and Bentham." Mr. Rogers styles the Bishop of Zanzibar's attitude regarding Kikuyu as "noble," and as making history in the English Church.

The closing chapter deals with the Church of Scotland. "Anachronisms may surround its religious organizations," but it "has made a noble contribution to the religious life of the world." "Clear-eyed vision, loyal faith, upright living, all these are in the life of Scotland, and are its salt and its strength."

The epilogue asks the question, What will be the effect of the war upon religion in Europe? We may soon see the beginning of an answer to the question, but at present no one can divine what will occur. All the more need for us to hold fast to "the truth as it is in Jesus." J. T. I.

THE TEACHING OF CHRIST. By Edward Gordon Selwyn. London: Longmans, Green and Co. Price 2s. 6d. net.

Under the guidance of modern criticism, with full acceptance of its principles, Mr. Selwyn has been led to a point at which Christianity itself is at stake. Harnack's "What is Christianity?" and Tyrrell's "Christianity at the Cross-Roads" have induced a reaction. The former renders Christianity "too dull and too ordinary a thing to be worth much trouble"; the latter leaves "no adequate room for the growth and play of the ethical life." For the satisfaction of faith a fresh study of the teaching of Christ, as recorded by the Synoptists, is undertaken. The method is to fall back upon a simple reading of the New Testament whenever prominent critics are at variance with each other. This savours too much of an evasion of the issues. The mind can never rest for long if avenues of investigation are closed against it. The conflict is serious, and there must be many who are feeling the full force of the difficulty. But rescue from their perilous

dilemma necessitates a rational rejection of critical hypothesis. If the criticism is irrefutable, it appears that faith must go. Mr. Selwyn's book has a distinct psychological value, and contains much that is well put. But the field of battle is ill-chosen. This is not the valley of decision.

THE HOLY GOSPELS OPENED. By the Rev. J. Stuart Holden, M.A., Vicar of St. Paul's, Portman Square, W. London: *Morgan and Scott*. Price 2s. 6d.

This is not a consecutive, or in any sense a full, commentary, but just the working out of a devotional thought taken from each chapter of the Four Evangelists, each meditation occupying as a rule, if not always, from one to two pages. As the writer says in his Preface, "In each chapter one prominent thought is selected for meditation, and some simple suggestions offered as to its meaning and practical application to personal life. At best these are but crumbs from the Loaf, gleams from the Sun, tiny grains of gold-dust from the Mine, whose great value lies in their testimony to the supreme worth of the Whole." Mr. Stuart Holden's rich devotional style is well known, and the book should have a large circulation. Here is a specimen of what will be found, taken from the meditation on St. Matt. xvii. 8, "To see 'no man but Jesus only' is the open secret of all assured salvation, of all abiding inspiration, of all adequate strength, and of all effective life and service. For indeed there *is* no other beside Him! Let us then daily climb up above the dust and din of earth into the mountain of prayer and fellowship, where we can see Him clearly and apprehend Him increasingly, as He touches us and bids us 'Arise, and be not afraid.'"

THE WAY OF RENEWAL. By the Rev. Cyril C. B. Bardsley. London: *Longmans, Green and Co.* Price 4d. net.

Anything from the pen of the devoted Hon. Secretary of the C.M.S. is certain of a welcome. In this booklet Mr. Bardsley has done two things, and, as might be expected, done them well. First, he has not only drawn attention to the failure of the Church, but has indicated the causes and the remedy. Secondly, he has given us what is really a manual of devotion. Each terse, tense chapter concludes with helpful suggestions for meditation and prayer, so that the reader is not lost in a maze of indefinite generalities, but finds something concrete to help him along the Way of Renewal. The failure of the Church is the result of the failure of the individual, and so—as Mr. Bardsley says—"the winning of the world depends upon the renewal of individual lives." We could wish that it were possible to bring out this call to Renewal in a penny edition, so as to secure for it the widest possible circulation among our Communicants and Church-workers.

A BOOK OF PRAYERS FOR STUDENTS. London: *Student Christian Movement*. Price 1s. 6d. net.

"This book," as we read in the Preface, "has been compiled to meet the special needs of members of the Student Christian Movement for a collection of prayers in a convenient form, suitable for private use and also for use at Christian Union Meetings, Bible circles, retreats and conferences." The Manual is divided into three parts. In Part I. there are Daily Services of

Thanksgiving and Intercession for one week. Part II. contains five Litanies for different subjects, while in Part III. we have a Collection of Prayers on Various Subjects. "Several members of the Student Movement," we are told, "have assisted in the compilation of this book." While the name of the S.C.M. is some guarantee as to the nature and soundness of the petitions, the prayers are drawn from many diverse sources, and the collection may be described as truly Catholic, and that in more senses than one. It would be difficult to say what need or requirement is not provided for in this little volume, so small that it may be carried in the pocket.

OUR WONDERFUL CATHEDRALS. By Gertrude Hollis. London: S.P.C.K. Price 2s. net.

After one chapter devoted to English Cathedrals in general, eleven of the most prominent are singled out, one chapter each being devoted to them. A great deal of information about these sacred buildings is given, including a number of legends and historical stories. There are a very large number of illustrations (sixty-three), including eight coloured plates. The book is specially intended for children, but we think older people might gain a vast amount of interesting information by reading it. Miss Hollis has evidently read much and deeply on the subject of our Cathedrals, and the history connected with them, and she has a happy knack of retailing her information in an interesting and fascinating manner.

IN THE SERVICE OF THE KING: A PARSON'S STORY. By Joseph B. Dunn. London and New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons.

We do not know when we came across a more delightfully unconventional autobiography than this, in which "I" never appears, because it is all written in the third person. This "parson" is not merely a theologian—he is somewhat of a philosopher as well, and an intensely human person into the bargain. He has delightful stories to tell of his experiences in country, town, and city parishes, and he knows how to tell them. Happy indeed were they who came under his influence, and we trust that through the printed page he will be able to reach and help many others.

THEY ALSO SERVE: FIVE PAPERS ON THE WAR. By George Hale Leonard. London: Student Christian Movement. Price 8d. net.

These papers, which were read to members of Bristol University by the Professor of Modern History, have been published, the author tells us, for the encouragement and consolation of those who have to stay at home in time of war. They are charming specimens of English prose. This is not their only merit—they are the expression of simple faith and piety. The two concluding papers, which are headed "Love makes all things easy," and are respectively entitled "The Little Dark Church" and "The Turn of the Road," are quite delightful.

"CALLED." By Mrs. T. W. W. Crawford (*née* Grimes). London: C.M.S. House. Price 2s. 6d. net.

The revered Bishop of Durham contributes a Preface to this delightful volume. As he reminds us, "the call" came many years ago to his own brothers—men whose praise is in all the churches—so that he is naturally

impressed by what he terms "the greatness and glory of the call to missionary service." It is this "glory of God's call" upon which Mrs. Crawford dwells in her opening chapter. It is, alas, but too true that "one small section only of the Church seems to have responded to the missionary call in any adequate way," and she quotes Dr. Fleming Stevenson as saying that "the Moravians moved upon our modern heathenism, not by a few adventurous ones, but by battalions." Subsequently the call of Old Testament worthies—Abraham, Moses, Gideon, Samuel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel—is considered; then the call of the Twelve and St. Paul. But the rest and greater part of the book is devoted to stories of how the call came to early and later missionaries, together with the testimony of living witnesses. So far as the stories of early missionaries are concerned, many of these are little known, and the account of how Raymund Lull became the first missionary to the Moslems in 1275, and of how Hans Egede, David Brainerd, William Carey and others responded is truly inspiring. Those in search of illustrations for missionary sermons or addresses will find here plenty of material, while those who have themselves heard the call, and are perplexed over the difficult question of "guidance," will be glad to read of how others found the clue of the maze.

THE MISSIONARY PROSPECT. By Charles H. Robinson, D.D. London: S. W. Partridge. Price 1s. net.

We are very glad to see that a new edition of this excellent survey of Christian missions has been called for. We ventured to commend the book when first issued, and we repeat the commendation now. Dr. Robinson gives to the student of missions a most convenient and careful handbook, written with accuracy, insight, and love. All Christian missions are dealt with, and plenty of interesting figures given. Here is food for many "missionary sermons." There is a cloth edition at 2s. 6d.

THE MEN WHO DIED IN BATTLE. By J. Paterson-Smyth, D.D. London: Hodder and Stoughton. Price 1s.

These are four sermons reprinted from the same author's "God and the War," and deal with the great question of what comes after death to "the thousands and thousands of splendid fellows, in the prime of their young manhood, with the high promise of their future unrealized, cut off in a moment." The first sermon shows that identity and consciousness continue, with added vigour and "excitement," in the more vivid life to which death is the only gate. The second and third sermons describe the life beyond. There is consciousness, memory, mutual recognition, friendship, and close interest in the doings of those left behind on earth. There must be mutual prayer. The fourth sermon discusses the fate of the great majority who never definitely chose for or against Christ in this life, "the men for whom we are afraid." Emphasis is laid on the importance of this life as the determining factor in human destiny, but this is not allowed to exclude the possibility of another chance being given to those who for various reasons did not accept Christ here. "We must believe that through all eternity, if the worst sinner felt touched by the love of God and wanted to turn to Him, that man would be saved." We have given a pretty full outline of the

little book. It is popular in style, and many of its statements will arouse opposition, and probably need qualification and, perhaps, more careful thought. Dr. Smyth is trying to bring comfort to bereaved relations, and there is much in his book which will do this. Of the four sermons, we like the first very much the best. Dr. Smyth feels that we cannot avoid, and should not avoid, praying for our dead.

PRAYERS FOR FAMILY WORSHIP. By Lady Richardson. London: *Religious Tract Society*. Price 1s. net.

Here are thirty prayers on general subjects, with four more on Sunday and five special prayers for Advent, Christmas, New Year, Good Friday, and Easter. Probably the idea is that of family prayer for a month. It is easy to see that the prayers have been drawn up by a Bible student. They are saturated with Bible language, from which, indeed, they are almost entirely composed. The subjects chosen are very beautiful, and the whole reflects the mind of a loving, happy servant of Christ.

IN PRAISE OF TEACHING MISSIONS. By Gerald Sampson, C.R. London: *Wells Gardner and Co.* Price 1s. 6d.

The author is concerned to demonstrate the difference between his "teaching mission" and the ordinary parochial mission of conversion. Both are perhaps needed, but certainly the "teaching mission" not least. Nor is he speaking of missions of instruction, which have different aims and are not successful. He advocates a special kind of "teaching mission" on lines which he says few or none have ever taken save himself. The teaching mission must be for exactly eight days, and inspires to joy in the Holy Ghost. Church-people are to be brought into closer, loving, real touch with God. It seems, in fact, to be a parochial Convention ending with a resolution card. Children are not included in the operations, and must be placed at the back of the Church, so that when tired or troublesome they "can easily go out." Best of all it is to have none present. Mr. Sampson has specialized on this one thing, and is very definite and very certain that the week's details, here given, must be carried out just as described. All local objections or desires are to be disregarded, experience having proved that the missionary's way is best and successful. It is interesting to notice continually how very decided Mr. Sampson is on these practical details. To many this will seem an advantage. We are most ready to recognize the loving spirit which keeps out all trace of religious controversy from a book coming from a member of the Mirfield Community. The missionary is charged to keep all such out of his mission. "There is a time for everything, but this is not that time."

OUR WONDERFUL EARTH. By F. A. Pitts. London: *S.P.C.K.* Price 2s. net.

This is an endeavour to tell to young people the story of the gradual formation and development of the earth as learnt from geological study. There is a glance at the nebular theories, followed by chapters on rocks, coal, volcanoes, and land formations. The action of wind and water, including snow and ice, on the earth's surface is explained, and the different "periods" familiar to students of animal life are named and described. There are over

forty illustrations. The story is told with reverence and the work is regarded as that of God. The book is intended for "young people," and the authoress has thrown it into a form which is intended to appeal to them. Perhaps it was impossible to avoid so many geological terms and names, but these will certainly tend to damp the ardour of some of the youngest inquirers who so constantly ask the kind of question which this interesting book answers so well. The story of the earth is indeed a "wonderful" one, and the idea of presenting it in a reverent form to the minds of the coming generation is distinctly good.

PRIVATE 7664: A FAITHFUL SOLDIER OF THE BRAVE WORCESTERS. By Edward Smith, J.P. London: *R.T.S.* Price 6d. net.

This is the life-story of a wild youth whose conduct brought him to a reformatory, and whose start in life gave no promise of a useful career. After his enlistment, however, he was brought to God while attending a meeting at a Soldiers' Home, and the letters written to the author of this brief memoir are full of testimony to the power of redeeming Grace. He fell at La Quenque Rue on October 28, 1914. It is just the book to put into the hand of a Christian soldier.

THE WAY OF THE GOOD PHYSICIAN. By Henry T. Hodgkin, M.A., M.B. London: *C.M.S. House.* Price 1s. net.

A graphically written account of Medical Mission work, to which is added a brief history of the C.M.S. Medical Missions. Excellent illustrations add weight to the letterpress, of which we can only say that there is not a dull page or paragraph.

THE HOPE OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD. By the Rev. G. C. Walker, B.A. Stockport: *The Edgeley Press, Ltd.* Price 1s. net.

Mr. Walker has given us in a very unpretentious form what is really a theological work worthy to take its place alongside more elaborate expositions of a subject at once profound and important. There is abundant evidence of wide reading and of quiet confidence in the Word of God.

[For Publications of the Month, see over.]

