

## Reviews of Books.

### CHRISTIANITY AND THE CHURCH.

CHRISTIANITY IN HISTORY. By J. Vernon Bartlet and A. J. Carlyle.  
London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd. 12s. net.

The time is ripe for a comprehensive view by men of encyclopædic knowledge of the way in which the leaven of Christianity has worked in history. It is almost impossible to approach the study of the subject with out *a priori* views that colour judgment and distort facts. Writers must have not only a coldly scientific detachment from speculative opinions—they must also possess sympathy with the Christian outlook if they are to avoid the pitfalls that lie in the path of historians who are intent on recording facts and fail to grasp the influence of emotion on human conduct. Christianity, however interpreted, is the greatest fact in modern history. It has influenced for the last two thousand years the development of human society and is to-day consciously or unconsciously working in the policies of the Great Powers of the world. We must however distinguish between the Spirit of Christ and the deeds of the institution that is associated with Him and owes its foundation to Him. Like all other organizations composed of fallible men with the weaknesses shared by all humanity, it has at times distorted truth and made the message subservient to the interests of the institution—in other words, in spite of the Divinity of the Founder of the Church, His followers have too often been intent on what would increase their own status, and imagined that by glorifying themselves as officers of the Church they did honour to the Head of the Church.

To-day we are the heirs of centuries of Christian activity. It is difficult to write on the march of the Church and the progress of Christian ideas and idealism without reading into the subject our own standpoint. We all believe that only as the Church reproduces the spirit of its Founder can it be true to its mission. We inherit certain ideas and a definite attitude which are the formative influences in our individual life and we have a natural bias to discover in the records of the past that which agrees with our mentality and to select only as true what is in accord with our convictions. Drs. Bartlet and Carlyle have set themselves to give us a conspectus of the development of Christian institutions and doctrine from the New Testament to the Christian philosophy of the twentieth century. They are well equipped for the work. Dr. Bartlet is a recognized authority on Christian origins and mediæval history; Dr. Carlyle has devoted his life to the study of Reformation and post-Reformation theology and ecclesiology—in the wide sense. What they do not know on their own special periods is not of first-class importance, and we began the study of this encyclopædic volume with great expectations.

Our authors have more than realized our hopes. They have written a book that will be quoted by scholars for many years to come, and in a masterly fashion they have sketched and described the working of the forces that have made Christendom as we know it. Both authors obviously had before them the conviction that the past lives in the present and that it is the duty of all serious students to trace the elements that have contributed to our current Christianity its fundamental characteristics. Accordingly they add to the value and interest of their work by living in an atmosphere of continuity, and like all who have ever attempted to study the life of the Church, they are possessed by the belief that in spite of all corruptions and accretions the Spirit of God never left His people and worked among men even when the institutions departed from the New Testament ideal. Again they never

forget that the Christian community lived in a world that was at once social and political. It coloured the lives of peoples and was itself influenced by its environment. There was action and reaction all along the line. It is not always easy to discover what was purely evanescent in the impingement of secular life upon religious growth, or what was permanent in the impact of Christian activity upon the secular state. Of one thing both writers seem assured. Human life lived in society is one, and it is impossible to divorce the secular from the sacred and the sacred from the secular. It is this attitude of mind that gives its special value to a work that recalls the books of Professor Gwatkin more than those of any other writer with whom we are acquainted, and it is no disparagement to the Oxford Dons to say that they carry one step further the ruling ideas that governed the outlook of the greatest of recent Church historians.

It is impossible for a reviewer to discuss in detail a volume that traces the progress of institutional Christianity as well as of doctrinal development through nineteen centuries. Turn where you will in its pages and you will find precisely the information you need to guide thought. If Episcopacy be treated it is traced from its beginnings to the days of Cyprian, when "the full working out of the Catholic idea of the Church, as one and holy in all its membership, was arrested; and only the representation of part of its being, the clergy—and this very partially—was in the end really attempted." "The Cyprianic episcopate was the creation of a good deal of history, and that in a period when its alchemy of change was very active."

The good as well as the evil of the papacy is recognized. "The service rendered to the independence of the spiritual society in Western Europe by the possibility of invoking an authority superior to and outside of the influence of the secular authorities of particular districts, was probably quite inestimable." While acknowledging this, our authors show the influence of the Decretals in building up the position of the papacy, while asserting plainly that we must give up as a superstition the idea that the Decretals were the real source of papal authority in the West. In reality the papacy owed its position to the felt need of a steadying influence in society, and men readily acquiesced in claims that added to their well-being. This, however, required historical foundation for its maintenance, and the forgers set to work and provided "facts" which had to be proved spurious in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

While thanking Drs. Bartlet and Carlyle for the illumination they have shed upon the growth of institutions and doctrine, we regret that so short an account is given of recent developments. After all we live in a new world largely moulded by the philosophy of idealism and the growth of modern science. Our environment is conditioned by influences that were unknown in past ages, and it is at once our misfortune and our gain that we have now a syncretism of knowledge that passes for Christian thought. We require guidance that will enable us to separate the various elements into their proper perspective. Our thought is in danger of becoming a chemical combination that is very different from a mechanical mixture in which the true and the false can, so to speak, be segregated. The modern mind no longer works in compartments. All our knowledge becomes fused, as it were, into a whole, and we badly need guidance that will save us from accepting as true certain elements that are popularly supposed to be essentials of sound thinking. On one point we seem to see a marked development in our current Christian conceptions. The Ethical note is stronger, but it is quite possible that Ethics may be mere pragmatism instead of the acceptance of an eternal difference between right and wrong. Schleiermacher has much to teach us, but we believe that it is reserved for the revival of Christian life that is long overdue

to rediscover the great Pauline truth that "in Christ" as a living Person all Ethics find their true goal and all Christian doctrine its complete fulfilment. The intermingling of the Personality of Christ with the personality of His follower is the secret of right thinking and right living. Drs. Bartlet and Carlyle will help many readers to see for themselves how the Church in the past has won and lost ground as it emphasized and neglected this fundamental fact. We hope that *Christianity in History* will be widely read, and we can promise all who begin the study of the book that they will use it for many years as a guide—trustworthy and well balanced—to the solution of difficult problems of life and thought.

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" IF A MAN DIE——"

CHRISTIANITY AND IMMORTALITY. By Vernon F. Storr. London: Longmans, Green & Co. 7s. 6d. net.

There are few men better fitted to write on immortality than the author of *The Development of English Theology in the Nineteenth Century*. That book made a deep impression on all readers, for it showed Mr. Storr to be in possession of a mind that is at once analytical and constructive. He has the power of going straight to the heart of a subject and of disentangling the accidental from the essential. If there be any portion of the theological horizon that needs clearing it is that covered by the words "after death." Speculation has been busy. The day of false prophets is upon us and everywhere men and women in the extremity of grief are looking for tangible proofs of survival. Spiritualism is rampant, and, as Dr. Forsyth has said, "One does not like to seem untender to the bereaved, but surely it is a poor ending to high-minded people when they find in West End mediums a certainty about their dear ones which they had renounced in Christ, and more comfort in the ghosts' banalities than in the power or silence of Him." No one can be blind to the fact that books with no other foundation than obscure psychological puzzles and theories built on evidence that is mostly subjective have a wide circulation and their authors are quoted as men who not only view but know the future and the viewless things.

Mr. Storr adds to the requisite scientific, theological and philosophical requirements for his task a style that is delightful in its lucidity and power of accurately representing his thought. In this respect his book has a charm and a coherence that rivet attention, and no one is ever left in doubt as to his own conviction on the many sidelights as well as on the main topic that he discusses. We have only one fault to find. He gives a detailed analysis but no index. Even in these days of paper shortage a two paged index would have made his essay more useful to the many who will again and again refer to it for the purpose of reproducing a striking argument.

Although the author compresses his thought into a short compass he is never scrappy. Practically every outstanding problem connected with immortality is faced boldly. He is thoroughly alive to the perplexities of modern thought and has a wide knowledge of the literature of the subject. His treatment of spiritualism is marked by sound common sense, and for our part we share his comment on the whole question of communication with the dead: "To buttress spiritual truth by seeking for evidence of a kind with that which rules in the world of sense perception is to misconceive what spiritual truth is." This has been well put by the Dean of St. Paul's: "Psychical research is trying to prove that eternal values are temporal facts, which they can never be." Apart from this fundamental objection to the effort to bring down the higher level of spiritual life to the lower level

of psychological pathology he has many grave and acute criticisms of the present state of the evidence for spiritualistic conclusions.

Mr. Storr rightly holds that the philosophical and moral evidence for immortality is cumulative. No one line of thought carries us to an ineluctable conclusion. Some of his paragraphs recall Martineau's argument in *A Study on Religion*, and we have the conviction that "there is that in man which requires God and immortality if it is to be satisfactorily explained." His treatment of the progressive growth of belief in immortality among the Hebrews is concise and accurate, and he makes the assertion—that is often overlooked—"the most significant feature in Christ's attitude to this problem is that He assumed man's immortality rather than argued about it." "Realization of God through communion with Him has immortality as its necessary implicate." If we once grasp these fundamental facts in our Lord's teaching we escape many of the perplexities that puzzle students who bring the modern atmosphere of doubt to the investigation of the New Testament.

Mr. Storr has many wise and profitable remarks on the resurrection of the body. He is no believer in the doctrine that we can accept the Easter Faith that Christ lives without believing the Easter Message, "He is risen." The many problems connected with our Lord's risen body are treated with a reverence and a reticence that deserve praise. He concludes: "Belief in the story of our Lord's resurrection will still be an act of faith, but it will not be an unreasonable faith."

We cannot linger over the discussion of the continuance of personality after death and the social aspect of immortality. His emphasis on the distinctive character of human personality is well timed, and we hope it will be grasped by readers. The more we reflect on the place "personality" holds in thought and fact the better we are able to find confidence for our hold on immortality. It has its abysmal depths that cannot be fathomed, but it also has a meaning for us all that cannot be ignored. We have never been able to see any grave difficulty in the contention that our personality exists and persists through our states of consciousness—colours and is coloured by the experiences of our daily life. Only a coarse materialistic idea of the relation between mind and matter involves us in difficulties. The more we know of what matter is the less materialistic we become.

Biblical students will be attracted by the masterly exposition of the traditional elements of the belief in a future life. They will not all agree with his conclusions, but they will find them invariably honest efforts to get at truth. He rejects the traditional view of the Second Advent, and maintains that we do not lose anything worth preserving if we disregard apocalyptic conceptions and interpret the Parousia in a spiritual sense. "The complete sovereignty of Christ is what the doctrine of the Parousia seeks to maintain. All power is His, and that power will hereafter be manifested in its fullness. That is what really matters for the Christian. Expressions of belief may vary with the ages. Christ Himself changes not, and discipleship is union with the unchanging Christ." Mr. Storr endeavours to support his view by a careful study of the teaching of St. John on the subject.

Practically all the Scriptural passages dealing with life after death are submitted to a close examination. Unlike many writers on the subject, Mr. Storr has no thesis to maintain. He believes that the wicked will suffer after death; he cannot find any Scriptural grounds for either universalism or conditional immortality, and he rejects both, but he appears to believe that extinction will be the fate of unrepentant rebellious souls. He utters a caveat against excessive speculation upon what is hidden from us. We must recognize our limitations and rest content with the facts that have been revealed to us.

We have said, we trust, sufficient to show the permanent value of this able and stimulating essay. It is never perverse or over subtle. It is everywhere marked by a sanity that compels admiration, and even when we disagree with Mr. Storr we do so with the feeling that we are somehow in fundamental agreement with him and are only giving more emphasis to some point that he has not seen in true perspective. This is decidedly a book to be read, re-read, and lent to troubled friends who are able to follow an argument that is never obscure and is always suggestive.

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#### EARL GREY.

ALBERT, FOURTH EARL GREY. A last word. By Harold Begbie. London: Hodder and Stoughton. 1917.

The talents of Mr. Begbie for lurid and picturesque journalism do not show in their wonted brilliance in this volume. The book is a very sincere and affectionate tribute paid by a generous friend to a noble and diversified character. As such it is admirable.

Yet it is deficient in those qualities without which such a book cannot achieve its proper end. We miss that subtle analysis, that nice poise of expression, that trained comprehension of parts and aspects of character, of which a psychological essay should be full.

It is good to learn from Mr. Begbie that a biography of Earl Grey is in contemplation. It may be hoped that when that biography does appear it will fill in a good deal that is wanting here, and will present its subject with a definiteness and clearness of outline alike desirable and due.

That Albert Grey is worthy of ample treatment and of abiding remembrance no one can doubt. Mr. Begbie has convinced every reader of that. Like Joseph, he dreamed dreams. Like Joseph, he sought his brethren. Like Joseph, he ruled his fellows wisely and well. Like Joseph, he had a genius for reconciliation. If, like Joseph, he had in youth tasted something more of sorrow and constraint of soul, his character might have haply been enriched and more profound. His friendships were many and strong. His passion for every form of beauty pure and ardent. His outlook on politics was Imperial in the best meaning of that ambiguous term. If his religious views were dissolving, his religious feeling was operative over all its existence. One lofty aim penetrated and coloured his whole being, that aim was to draw together all British subjects in the brotherhood of the British Empire, and to make that empire a home for all mankind. His noble optimism is his best legacy to us. His belief in the power of Christian love to create and sustain the best in humanity was the spring of his optimism. It is, I suppose, for this element in the book that the Bishop of Bath and Wells has recommended Mr. Begbie's essay as Lenten reading for his Clergy; for the principles of Albert Grey took not much account of Episcopacy or of those things on which Bishops usually set their hearts.

H. J. R. MARSTON.

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#### OTHER VOLUMES.

TOOLS READY TO HAND. Outline addresses, Talks to children, Bible Readings and Hints to Workers, etc. Arranged by J. Ellis. London: Robert Scott. 2s. net.

Mr. Ellis has established for himself a reputation for collecting and producing materials for those who have to give addresses or teach the young, and he certainly well maintains that reputation in this volume—the list of subjects showing a variety which should satisfy the most fastidious.

THE GERMAN TERROR IN FRANCE. By Arnold J. Toynbee, late Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford. London: *Hodder and Stoughton*. 1s. net.

If there remain anywhere an Englishman who needs an "eye-opener" this is the book to put into his hands. Full of illustrations, many of them very terrible and realistic, these form, with the very graphic narrative of the letterpress, an indictment of German methods and German soldiers that ought to strengthen the resolution and stiffen the back of every Briton.

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THE PRICE OF POWER. By Rev. J. Stuart Holden, M.A., D.D. London: *Marshall Brothers*. 2s. 6d. net.

A collection of addresses which have been delivered by Dr. Holden at various conferences in England and America, these pages contain forceful teaching on the ministry of the Holy Spirit. There is that orderliness of arrangement, directness of appeal and close adherence to the teaching of Scripture which is characteristic of all the author's utterances.

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ROME, TURKEY AND JERUSALEM. By the late Canon Edward Hoare. With additional notes by the Rev. J. H. Townsend, D.D. London: *C. J. Thynne*. 1s. 6d. net.

This is the sixth impression of a new edition of sermons which were preached nearly forty years ago. This is a fact, we think, of happy significance. It serves to show that the attention of Christian people has been called afresh to the study of prophecy, especially to those scriptures which are finding their fulfilment in these days of the Great War. Not the least interesting part of this unpretentious little book are the notes by Dr. Townsend which bring it up to date. We feel that this latest impression will, like its predecessors, be quickly exhausted.

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THE TIME OF REFRESHING. By the Rev. H. A. Wilson, M.A. London: *Robert Scott*. 2s. net.

The Rector of Cheltenham has given us a delightful little volume of addresses, delivered in substance in Cheltenham Parish Church and St. Matthew's and in Gloucester Cathedral. The sub-title describes it as a book for Lenten meditation, but these short chapters are full of helpful messages for every day of life. We should like to give some extracts, but the exigencies of space forbid, and indeed to cull from so much that is suggestive would be no easy task. We therefore content ourselves with expressing the hope that the book will meet with the reception it deserves.

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THE HIBBERT JOURNAL. April, 1918.

This number is well up to the level of interest and ability associated with the *Hibbert*, and has little of the dullness which must sometimes mark so solid a journal. The article on Erasmus at Louvain, by Professor Foster Watson, gives an appreciation of the greatest of the humanists which will be valued by all students of Erasmus. Sir Philip Magnus has an ingenious suggestion in regard to Jonah's "whale," and his article is well worth reading. From the pragmatic standpoint, Mr. R. H. Dotterer defends the idea of a finite God. His article is interesting, but we are not convinced. The Rev. R. H. Coates' article, with the apparently incongruous title "Birmingham Mystics," should not be missed.