

REVIEWS OF BOOKS.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE.

CHRISTIANITY ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE. By the Rev. S. C. Carpenter, B.D.
London: S.P.C.K. 10s. 6d.

Mr. Carpenter has given us a valuable study of the Third Gospel. He has read wisely and widely and is steeped in its contents. He realizes that we must see events through the eyes of contemporaries and that knowledge of the environment in which our Lord lived is essential for a full comprehension of the teaching that transformed the world. He also lays stress upon the fact that St. Luke wrote as a Churchman for members of the Church. That is quite true, but we think that Mr. Carpenter reads into first-century Churchmanship a great deal of present day Churchmanship which has an atmosphere that is in many respects different from that of the age of St. Luke. Many will be surprised that he carries his ideas of the place occupied by the Bible in the Church so far as to write, "Christian instruction is always given in the first instance by some representative of the Church. The attempt to produce conversions to Christianity by distributing copies of the Bible or even of the Gospels is mistaken. I do not at all assert that it is a useless or mischievous thing to do. But it is not an adequate method of producing conversions." It is assuredly true that the Apostles did not circulate the New Testament, but it is more than conceivable that men of the Apostolic outlook living in the twentieth century would gladly seize upon the opportunity of circulating the Scriptures as the best means of leading men to the knowledge of the Saviour. Many have in our day been led to Christ by reading the Word, and if they are immature Christians the same may be said of many who have been brought up in surroundings where the direct appeal of the Bible to the heart is discounted.

When we leave on one side this point of view we have nothing but praise for an excellent and independent study of the Third Gospel. Mr. Carpenter is fully alive to the connection between St. Paul and St. Luke; he is not a writer who seeks success by ill-founded novelty, and he gives us an outline of the various tendencies that combined in making St. Luke the man he was. He wisely says that the evidence that St. Paul considered Christianity as one of the mysteries is very slight, and he truly expounds 1 Corinthians x. 14-22: "What your mysteries profess to do, the Breaking of the Bread really does." In dealing with the Eschatological background our author shows the importance of the close relationship between St. Paul and his physician. In fact we learn from Mr. Carpenter the value of the Pauline outlook as an aid to the interpretation of St. Luke's writings.

This book is not a commentary—it is more elucidating however than most commentaries, for it deals with, as it were, the landscapes as distinct from the flower-beds of the Gospel. Here is a passage typical of many: "As a painter of portraits St. Luke excels. His short pen-pictures of Zaccharias, the Virgin Mother, Martha and Mary, Zacchaeus, and the repentant robber are masterly, and though it is St. Mark whose Gospel is supposed to contain the recollections of St. Peter, and St. Matthew who is commonly said to have had access to a special Petrine source, yet it is from St. Luke that we have these three penetrating touches that make St. Peter seem to us the most human of the Apostles (Luke v. 8, xxii. 31, 32, and xxii. 61). Finally, to his description of the 'woes' upon the scribes or lawyers which he has in common with

St. Matthew, St. Luke adds the dramatic touch: 'Ye have taken away the key of knowledge' (xi. 52)."

We cordially commend the sober exegesis and historical insight of the work of the Evangelist whose reputation for accuracy has been re-established in our time. Mr. Carpenter gives us careful summaries of the conclusions of English and foreign writers, and may be trusted in his presentation of their opinions. His *obiter dicta* are often very shrewd, and he has the gift of illuminating an argument by the assertion of something that is at once novel and self-evident. Is there not great force in the statement that our Lord "has created incidentally and almost casually, in the course of His redeeming of man's soul—the only true democracy that is ever likely to exist"? There are many such passages that pull the reader up, force him to think and send him on his reading with new ideas.

THE ATONEMENT.

THE ATONEMENT AND OURSELVES. By P. L. Snowden, Vicar of Hepworth.
London: S.P.C.K. 10s. 6d. net.

The war has brought the doctrine of the Atonement into prominence. Before 1914 the tendency of writers and preachers was to shrink from the message of the Cross, and critics fastened on the contrast between the doctrine of the Atonement and the teaching of modern civilisation that showed clearly the upward march of humanity from the time of the "fall upward." We no longer dwell in the days of human content with humanity. We now know that human nature remains what it always was and that unless we are freed from the guilt and power of sin and helped to overcome temptation we cannot attain the goal of our aspirations. The need of redemption is being felt, and the study of the New Testament teaching on this question has taken possession of many of our best theological thinkers. "*Via Crucis—Via Crucis*" has once more become a prominent feature in the pulpits and in the thoughts of our people.

Mr. Snowden has written a war book. During his war work he had opportunities for meditation apart from books. The fruit of his thought is given in an exposition of the Atonement as a vindication of the holiness of God. He says: "In recent years the Church has shrunk from adequate presentation of God's justice, because, being unable to show how such claims could be satisfied. It was felt to amount to a religion of despair. As a result of this failure both the fear and the love of God have been dying out in the world, for experience proves that a person cannot be deeply loved unless his character is one which on due occasion calls for fear also." He holds that Divine Justice occupies a fundamental place in the New Testament, and that oneness with Christ is the note that should be sounded by all Christian teachers as the solution to the troubles of our day and the forerunner of the longed-for revival of religion.

Briefly the argument sustained is that the New Testament takes up the theology of the Old Testament which stresses the retributory attitude of God towards sin. It lays down that Christ was our ransom and our sacrifice, and this means that He paid the price of human sin by suffering the penalty demanded by Divine Holiness. "The history of the Atonement itself, from the beginning up to recent times—when an effort is made to explain this view away—proves that it is the original and powerful idea conveyed by this teaching: and some of the evidence to be adduced in favour of the view that, in the first instance, sin calls for divine retribution, and not

only penitence, is of the most authoritative nature." He then discusses the well-known passages on which this view rests.

We are glad to have so honest and fearless a presentation of one view of the Atonement—a view that cannot be explained away from the pages of Scripture. Mr. Snowden rightly thinks that salvation is not to be found in any system of thought or practice, but only "in union with the Personality or our Lord—His life and death. That is our religion, our Gospel. Christianity needs to be rebuilt upon the Cross of Christ." We agree, and whatever form the movement towards a revival of Apostolic Christianity may take, we are assured, if it is to be successful, it must be centred in the Cross. No Christian religious movement has ever left a permanent mark upon the thought of its time unless it proclaimed Christ Crucified. It was so in the beginning; the influence of the great medievalists in so far as it was spiritual centred on the Cross; the Reformation had the secret of its power in justification by personal faith in a crucified and living Saviour; the Evangelical fathers preached the Cross; and the work of Keble and Newman would not have forced its way had it not laid emphasis upon the Sacrifice for Sin in the death of our Lord. As long as we place the Cross in the background of the Gospel we cannot hope for revival—when the Cross regains its place Christianity will move forward, and we thank Mr. Snowden for a well-thought-out argument that cannot fail to impress deeply all who follow it Bible in hand to verify quotations.

S.P.C.K. VOLUMES.

THE INSPIRATION AND AUTHORITY OF HOLY SCRIPTURE. By G. D. Barry. 4s. 6d.

THE EARLY CHRISTIAN BOOKS. By W. J. Ferrar. 3s. 6d.

THE CREEDS AND MODERN THOUGHT. By C. Harris. 2s.

PHILOSOPHIC THOUGHT AND RELIGION. By D. A. Jones. 2s.

We have become so accustomed to well-printed and delightfully bound volumes from S.P.C.K. that we are inclined to forget the thought and labour involved in their production. We no longer expect dingy unattractiveness to characterize Theological Works. "The Handbooks of Christian Literature" have been enriched by the issue of the excellent works by Mr. Barry and Mr. Ferrar. Both books are needed, and we are glad to say they satisfy the need. We know no other volume that gives so concise and accurate an account of the place of Holy Scripture in the early Church, and we believe that no one can read it without feeling that the current disparagement of the Bible is a reversal of the testimony of the Apostolic and Primitive Church. Mr. Ferrar's admirable summary of the teaching of the Apostolic Fathers and other early Christian writings is lucid and accurate. We thank him for his inclusion of the so-called Odes of Solomon, although they do not fall into the period of this book.

Mr. D. A. Jones is rather thin in his discussion of the attitude of philosophic thought towards religion. He does not tell us enough, and somehow we have no definite impressions left on our mind. It has a number of pointed sentences which convince us the author could teach us much, but we do not believe any man in so short a space could accomplish what Mr. Jones sets out to perform.

On the other hand, Dr. Harris, by confining himself to the definite point that the Creeds are compatible with a developing theology, satisfies our minds and leaves us clearly under the conviction that a reconstruction of Christianity that rejects the statements of fact made in the Creeds cannot be considered the Christianity of Christ and His Apostles. We hope that his argument will receive the attention it deserves.

LITURGICAL COLOURS.

ENGLISH LITURGICAL COLOURS. By Sir William St. John Hope and E. C. Cuthbert F. Atchley. *S.P.C.K.* 25s. net.

This volume is a monument of industry and a mine of information upon the subject of the colours of the different vestments, "altar" hangings, and similar decorations of English Churches and Cathedrals, compiled from such inventories, registers, wills, and other sources of knowledge as have survived the ravages of time and the carelessness or enmity of men. The general result of the inquiry is that in respect of colour there was no hard and fast rule, for the simple reason that large numbers of parishes were poor, and consequently had to make use of what they could get. As the writers of this book say (p. 7), "In considering any usage of colours it is necessary to point out how much depends in the first place upon the wealth or poverty of a church and the number and quality of its goods. A church with many ornaments may easily follow a colour rule, but one with few must adapt itself to circumstances." To the same effect we find (p. 108), "The colour for funerals, obits, requiem mass, etc., was generally *black* according to the rules. Wills and inventories tell the same story, but they also furnish a number of variants which show that there was no such thing as uniformity." Nor do we see much reason why there should be. It is largely a matter of common sense and of taste, and the means to gratify it. Elaborate ornamentation with frequent changes, and rigid rules governing both, tend to fussiness over points which have no real importance, and draw away the attention from what really matters. As a historical record this book is of considerable interest, and as such it appeals to us, but for practical purposes in present-day use it leaves us cold. It is well furnished with appendices, bibliography and index, and the publishing department of the *S.P.C.K.* deserve great credit for the sumptuous form in which it is produced.

THE BLESSED SACRAMENT.

THE BLESSED SACRAMENT. By Preb. H. P. Denison, B.A. *Robert Scott.* 2s. 6d. net.

A curious book issued in connection with the Benediction controversy, and quite characteristic of the so-called "Catholic" mind. Every one else is wrong and always has been. We read of the "furious opposition of the Bishops"; of "well-worn Protestant clap-trap"; that the great bulk of English Church-people "have not got the intelligence either of the disciples or of the heretics," and more to the same effect. It will no doubt suit those who like this kind of thing, but it will neither conciliate nor convince opponents, and in general it suggests the probable weakness of a case so advocated. High Church-people fare as badly at Mr. Denison's hands as Protestants or Bishops do; and it is interesting to have from such a quarter an attack upon the term "Real Presence" as commonly used. He reminds us that the word "Presence," as applied to the Sacrament, is "neither scriptural nor liturgical," and in this he is right: the advocates of the "Real Presence" have as many difficulties to face as those who, like the author, uphold Transubstantiation. He speaks of them as "creeping round and evading the truth of the word 'is' and saying that the Body of Christ is 'present in' the Sacrament; whereas our Lord simply says that the Sacrament 'is' His Body." The bulk of the book consists of a confused and contradictory attempt to show how the literal interpretation of "This is my body" leads us to Transubstantiation, but, unfortunately for the argument, the literal interpretation gets lost on the way.