

## NOTES ON RECENT BOOKS.

TWO books by Professors of the Union Theological Seminary, New York, deal with kindred subjects. Professor Eugene William Lyman, Marcellus Professor of the Philosophy of Religion, has written *The Meaning and Truth of Religion* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 10s. 6d. net). The book contains an examination of the numerous theories and speculations that have been current in recent years on the various aspects of religious thought, and offers a positive contribution showing the true place of religion as a creative power with definite functions in every department of human thought and activity. But all depends upon an adequate conception of God, on which is based a true view of His relationship to the universe and to man, as a part of nature, and as also having kinship with God. The inadequacy of many of the solutions of the problems offered by thinkers is shown, and the ultimate conclusion reached is that God is both transcendent and immanent, and that there is a process in His redemptive and creative love in which man shares as co-worker by his struggles and aspirations in the formation of the Beloved Community and a Spiritual Universe. Those who are interested in the varied phases of modern speculation will find much to interest them in the working out of Dr. Lyman's conclusions.

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Professor Henry P. Van Dusen's *The Plain Man seeks for God* (Charles Scribner's Sons, 8s. 6d. net) is an examination of the average layman's ideas about God, showing their inadequacy and the lines of approach to a true conception. "The Plain Man's Dilemma" is stated and the roots of his difficulties explained. Much is due to the scepticism of Kant, and much to modern philosophical and scientific teaching. These difficulties are met by an interpretation of the realm of facts and the experience of values. This leads on to a true appreciation of the Ultimate Reality and to the realisation of the Living God. A number of practical considerations follow in regard to prayer and worship. A vigorous criticism is bestowed upon the Humanism "which has pulled our civilisation to the brink of disaster," that of Christians who give homage to the God of Love on Sundays and deny Him on the other six days of the week. Although there may be some conclusions of the author which may not be accepted, this book will be found an interesting and suggestive survey of many important aspects of recent thought.

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*The Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ*, by James S. Stewart, B.D. (S.C.M. Press, 2s. 6d. net), is a very useful series of Bible Class lessons which can be strongly recommended to those seeking fresh and suggestive lines of thought in their teaching.

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The most perplexing problems to many Christian people to-day are those connected with the bearing of Christianity upon the organisation of our corporate life. Many are asking if the present form of civilisation can really be regarded as Christian, and whether it must not give way to something more in harmony with the will of God. The lines of any true development are obscure, and the average man is confused as to his individual responsibilities and duties. The Rev. V. A. Demant, B.Litt., B.Sc., Director of Research in the Christian Social Council, London, has dealt with the whole subject of Christian Sociology in *God, Man and Society* (S.C.M. Press, 6s.). The book is warmly recommended by the Bishop of Lichfield and Dr. A. E. Garvie as "a valuable contribution to Christian thought on social matters" by a capable and well-equipped writer. This thorough examination of the highly complex conditions of to-day makes clear that no solution of the economic problems can be satisfactory which does not recognise the spiritual basis on which all human relationship must rest. Mr. Demant's treatment of these difficult yet pressing questions provides the guidance that many are seeking.

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In *Counter-Attack from the East* (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 7s. 6d. net), Mr. C. E. Joad makes an examination of the Hibbert Lectures of the Eastern philosopher Sir C. Radhakrishnan on "An Idealist View of Life" the occasion of an exposition not only of the interaction of Eastern and Western thought, but of his own views on current tendencies. Christian thinkers who wish to measure the strength of current opposition to their beliefs will find it useful to consider Mr. Joad's position, for he says: "I am an avowed agnostic, openly critical of official religions, author of a book, *The Present and Future of Religion*, wherein official Christianity as preached by the Anglican Churches and embodied in their organisation is repudiated, and its continued decline prophesied and acclaimed." His conception of God is that "He is projected by the mind of man upon the empty canvas of an indifferent universe," and he criticises the New Hinduism of Radhakrishnan because it is based on a belief in God. His own solution for the life of man lies in the renaissance of a sense of values directed through education to the use of leisure. To Christian thinkers this must seem an inadequate provision without the background of religion and belief in God as revealed in Jesus Christ.

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The addresses given at the Cromer Convention last summer have been published by the S.P.C.K. under the title *Christ our Redeemer: The Cross in Human Life* (2s. 6d. net). The opening address on the title subject was given by the Bishop of Ripon, and is followed by the Rev. R. O. P. Taylor's "The Redemption Principle in the Universe." Canon C. E. Raven dealt with two subjects, "The Cross and Redemption," and "The Cross and the World." The Dean of Manchester had also two topics, "The Unfolding Purpose of Redemption," and at the closing assembly, "The Cross in Christian

Experience." The aim of the Conference as expressed by Canon Raven was "to insist with no less emphasis than our forebears upon the redemptive efficacy of Calvary; and at the same time, alongside of that insistence, set ourselves to interpret the Cross against a Christ-centred and Cross-centred view of the universe." Archdeacon Vernon Storr gave a course of Bible Readings. The subjects of these were Sin and Reconciliation, Faith and Justification, and Life out of Death. The Conference speakers sought to present old truths in the light of the needs of modern thought, and these addresses deserve careful reading, both for their subject-matter and their method of treatment.

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"What happens to the soul after death?" This is the question which Mr. James Thayer Addison considers in *Life beyond Death in the Beliefs of Mankind* (George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 8s. 6d. net). Mr. Addison, of the Episcopal Theological School, Cambridge, Massachusetts, treats his subject with American thoroughness. He presents "a brief survey of all the important beliefs about the future life among uncivilised peoples and in the great religions of the world." He writes from the point of view of the historian rather than the philosopher, and tells in an interesting way of the "rudimentary beliefs" held in regard to such matters as ancestor worship, ghosts, transmigration and reincarnation. The more "advanced beliefs" regarding immortality, resurrection and judgment, hell and heaven, are considered in Part II, and a useful list of books is added for further study. This will be found a helpful examination of an important element by students of comparative religion.

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*Is the Bible True?*, by B. F. C. Atkinson, M.A., Ph.D., Under Librarian, University Library, Cambridge (Thynne & Co., Ltd., 2s. 6d. net), can best be described as a defence of the Bible on conservative lines against theories of the higher critics. The Wilhausen theory of the origin of the Pentateuch is rejected and Moses is claimed as the author of the books. The claims of evolution are discarded. Early monotheism is asserted, and the inspiration of the original words of the Scriptures maintained with inerrancy on all matters of scientific knowledge. Dr. Orr Ewing contributes a Foreword in which he approves of Dr. Atkinson's method of treatment, although all his solutions may not be accepted.

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*The Psychological Teaching of St. Augustine*, by James Morgan, D.D. (Elliot Stock, 7s. 6d. net), will interest students of Patristic Literature as showing a new aspect of the writings of this great Father of the Church. Dr. Morgan shows how closely modern psychological thought approaches the teaching of St. Augustine.

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Dr. De Lisle Shortt, in *The Influence of Philosophy on the Mind of Tertullian* (Elliot Stock, 4s. 6d. net), shows that the greatest of the early Fathers was largely influenced by Greek philosophy,

especially by the Stoic School, and through him the influence was passed on to the theological thought of later ages.

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Dr. James Mackinnon's *The Gospel in the Early Church* (Longmans, Green & Co., 16s. net) is "A Study of the Early Development of Christian Thought" up to the middle of the second century on liberal lines. In its earliest form the Gospel was mainly in a Jewish mould, but the influence of Hellenic thought, and the environment of the early Church introduced elements that were not "purely superterrestrial" but the outcome of historic conditions.

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The Parables of Our Lord are naturally a favourite subject with preachers, but young preachers may sometimes find themselves in difficulties in the interpretation of them. Many have experienced the difficulties which arise from endeavouring to make a scheme of interpretation which will fit the various points that they see in a parable. There are a number of standard books dealing with the subject and much help is to be gained from them. A new book called *The Message of the Parables*, by J. F. McFadyen, D.D., Hislop College, Nagpur, C.P., India (James Clarke & Co., Ltd., 6s. net), will provide a helpful guide as to the best way to treat the parables. Valuable suggestions are first given as to the Teaching Methods of Jesus. These are worthy of special attention as an introduction to the parabolic teaching. The question, "Why did Jesus employ the parabolic method?" is then dealt with. A chapter on the parables as allegory points out some of the mistakes that have been made in treating the parables merely as allegories, and although Our Lord had no bias against allegory when it suited his purpose, it is a mistake to regard allegory as providing the key to the interpretation of a parable. A chapter on "Parable Interpretation" accentuates the important point that in each parable there is only one central message, and this is an important fact for preachers to remember. A general view is then taken of some of the parables, and, after this, individual parables are explained. In this section preachers will find much useful guidance and suggestion. Not the least advantage of these interpretations in several instances, is the instruction as to what is not to be deduced from the parable, while the central thoughts are presented with great force and clearness. A final résumé sums up the general contents of Our Lord's teaching as it is given in the parables. A useful list of books is appended.

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As the celebration of the Centenary of the Oxford Movement is over, interest in the literature which appeared in connection with it will probably now rapidly abate. Much of what appeared was purely of a partisan propaganda character, and may have served its ephemeral purpose. Of this class is Mr. C. B. Mortlock's *The People's Book of the Oxford Movement* (3s. 6d.) which may be pardoned for its prejudiced presentation of Protestantism, as it was intended to serve the popular purpose of attributing everything

good in recent Church life to the Tractarians and their successors. Of more serious character are the booklets of Dr. F. L. Cross in the S.P.C.K. "Oxford Movement Centenary Series" on *The Oxford Movement and the Seventeenth Century* and *The Tractarians and Roman Catholicism* (1s. 6d. net). It was obvious that those who accepted the Roman view of the Church must ultimately find their spiritual home in the Roman Communion. In *The Oxford Movement: Its History and its Future* Mr. J. Lewis May gives "A Layman's Estimate of it" (John Lane, 10s. 6d. net). He is in full sympathy with the Movement and regards it as having a universal application in reviving the sacramental principle and asserting the primacy of the spiritual over the material, as well as removing "the long tyranny of the pulpit over the altar." We may be pardoned for believing that the true conception of the sacramental principle is not to be found in the teaching of either Romanists or Anglo-Catholics, but in the proper proportions to be learnt from the New Testament, which certainly shows the primacy of the spiritual over the material. Little is to be gained by setting up a tyranny of the altar over the pulpit, especially as our Church teaches us that the clergy are ministers of the Word and Sacraments, and it is obvious that the Word comes first, and must do so if the Sacraments are not merely to be magical transactions.

The Bishop of Durham, in the first part of his third Visitation Charge to his diocese, has written strongly in condemnation of the Group Movement (Oxford University Press, 2s. 6d. net). He regards the Movement as gravely, even fatally, defective in three important respects. These he indicates as disregard for the intellect, as associated with the moods of Adolescence and as offering a conception of Christianity too meagre and limited. Yet he has to admit that the Church has not done all that it should in providing for the needs which "Groupism" endeavours to meet. The Bishop is always forcible in the expression of his views, but not always convincing. In contrast to this view of the Movement may be placed *The Conversion of the Church*, by the Rev. Samuel U. Shoemaker (Fleming H. Revell Company, 2s. 6d. net). Mr. Shoemaker is the Rector of Calvary Church, New York, and he tells of what the Movement has meant to him and to his own people. Canon L. W. Grensted, who came into touch with Mr. Shoemaker during visits to America in connection with the Groups, contributes a Foreword. He tells of the vigorous life infused into a tired parish in one of the districts of New York from which the Glory, ecclesiastically speaking, had departed. Simply but enthusiastically Mr. Shoemaker emphasises the need of a revival, and shows how by the Conversion of Christians and their living in touch with God a transformation has taken place, and a timid, ineffective and over-organised Church had been changed into the Church which Christ intended—the fellowship of his radiant followers, His brotherhood and His body. Few will be able to read this book without feeling the need of that reviving power which the author so clearly sets out.

Thirty sermons, including several for the Church Seasons, have been published by the Bishop of Barking, under the title, *The One Foundation* (Skeffington and Son, Ltd., 6s. net). The Bishop has made a striking selection from the sermons which he has preached on a wide variety of occasions. These include the incorporation of the Borough of Barking, when apt use was made of Nehemiah's building the wall of Jerusalem. This presented "Ideals for a New Borough." "Ideals for a New Church" were presented on a Sunday after the Consecration of a new Church at Newcastle-on-Tyne. Some of the others were preached on several important anniversaries connected with outstanding men like St. Francis, Bishop Ridley, the Poet Cowper. Several are addressed to young people, and several were preached on festivals of the Church. It is difficult, as the Bishop suggests, to find one common thread to connect such varied discourses, yet he may justly claim that they refer ultimately to one central theme—that of the first sermon, *The One Foundation*. He hopes that his message may be proved to be based on Jesus Christ and Him Crucified. The sermons will be found very suggestive, especially by preachers and teachers.

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*Sceptical Seekers* is the title of a rather unusual book which takes the form of religious conversations edited by an Unknown Philosopher. The discussions deal with such subjects as Suffering, Prayer, Church Going, Missionary Work.

A little book called *Christ's Crusade*, by Rev. George Higgs, develops the thesis that Love is the motive and essence of Christ's work in and for the world. The Church has declined sadly because she has so often forgotten this central fact.

In *Our Village* and other Sermons, by the Rev. Andrew Burt, B.D., we have nine sermons preached to a Scottish congregation in Aberdeenshire. Amongst these simple and helpful discourses is a harvest sermon and one on the Lord's supper.

These are all published by Arthur H. Stockwell, Ltd., 29 Ludgate Hill, at 2s. 6d. each.

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The Rev. Thomas Houghton issues *The Oxford Movement Exposed* (The Gospel Magazine Office, 1s. 6d. net). Its title explains its purpose.

## CHURCH BOOK ROOM NOTES.

### WINE OFFICE COURT, FLEET STREET, E.C.4.

**Family Prayers.**—The Church Book Room has published a new volume of Prayers entitled *Ask What I Shall Give Thee* (2s.), compiled by the Rev. Thomas S. Hall, B.D., formerly Incumbent of Upper Falls Parish, Belfast. The prayers are for morning and evening for four weeks, and are mainly a selection of prayers, ancient and modern, arranged after the manner of the Lord's Prayer for family and personal use. The prayers have been selected with much care and prayer, and are not meant to supersede but rather to supplement private devotions. The Archbishop of Armagh states in a Foreword: "In this little book are brought together, and ordered for our use in the way our Lord has taught us, the words in which the deepest longings of human hearts have found expression in their seeking after God. All the centuries of spiritual experience speak in these words. I thank the compiler for his labour of love."

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**For the Teacher.**—A little book entitled *Boys Together: A Study in the Lives of Jesus Christ, John the Baptist and St. Paul*, by Dorothy M. Graves, has been issued at 1s., being three simple studies of the boyhood days of John the Baptist, Jesus Christ, and St. Paul. With the latter the story is extended to embrace the subject of his missionary journeys and Epistles. It contains eight excellent reproductions of photographs taken by the Author in Palestine. It is intended for the help of young Sunday School teachers and young people who are witnessing for Jesus Christ, many of whom have limited time for Bible reading and study. It is through the "eye-gate," as well as the "ear-gate," that the work of Bible teaching must be done and children are usually interested in the children who live "over the sea," and the fact that Bible lands and customs are in many respects as they were in New and even in Old Testament days makes the picturing of the Bible background not so difficult as some may suppose.

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**Confirmation.**—*Confirmation* by the Bishop of Chelmsford has been reprinted in the Church Booklet Series, price 1d. each or 10d. per dozen. It will be found very useful for general circulation before Confirmation Classes are held.

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**Parochial Church Councils.**—From letters and inquiries received by the Church Book Room it is evident that many Secretaries of Parochial Church Councils do not yet realise that a new Measure for the Representation of the Laity became law in 1929. It changes the forms of application for enrolment and in some important details varies the procedure under the Enabling Act. For instance, only one application form for enrolment is now required for resident and non-resident electors. Mr. Albert Mitchell has revised and thoroughly brought up to date his *Red Book*, giving the Enabling Act and these new forms, namely: Application for Enrolment on Church Electoral Roll; Form of Notice of Revision of Church Electoral Roll; Notice of Enrolment of a Non-Resident; Notice to cancel Entry in another Parish; Notice of Removal to another Parish; and Notice of Annual Parochial Church Meeting. A sample packet of forms will be sent on receipt of 3d.

**Gift Books and Prizes.**—It is unfortunate that so many of the excellent historical tales which one met with a few years ago are now out of print and unobtainable, but the following may be mentioned and commended as Gift Books and Prizes: *I Will Maintain, Defender of the Faith, God and the King, and William, by the Grace of God*, by Marjorie Bowen, price 3s. 6d. each, *Follow the Gleam*, 3s. 6d., *Lest We Forget*, 2s. 6d., *The Flame of Fire*, 2s. 6d., and *The Chariots of the Lord*, 1s. 6d., by Joseph Hocking. The following are reprints of Miss Alcock's valuable works: *Dr. Adrian, Under Calvin's Spell, The Spanish Brothers, and Crushed Yet Conquering*, all priced 3s. 6d.

The Church Book Room has published a list of Gift Books and Prizes which will be sent on receipt of a post card. The books named in the list have been carefully chosen.

Amongst the books which have been recently sent to us, we would like to mention specially Messrs. Raphael Tuck & Sons "Happy Youngsters" Library, which now consists of a series of twelve books. With a full-page colour plate and numerous black and white drawings; the books are very attractive and are suitable for young children. They are priced 1s. and are in an illustrated stiff paper cover with the picture running across the front, spine, and back; also in full cloth in two colours at 1s. 6d. The following are stocked in the Book Room: *Told in the Jungle, Tales of the Aeroplanes, On the Road (told by Bobbin the Car), Robin Hood and His Merry Men, Robinson Crusoe, and Dickens Stories for Boys and Girls*. The "Little People's" Library published at 6d. may also be mentioned. The series contain eighteen charming little books with one colour plate and several drawings in black and white. The following are specially mentioned: *By Sea and Air, Elephant Tales, Motor Land, Tales of the Farm, Off by Train, and Little Tales of Little Dogs*. The new edition to the "Storyland Treasury" Library with realistic "come-to-life" panoramas, is *Told by the Animals* (2s. 6d.). This consists of 160 pages letterpress with two full-page colour plates and numerous black and white drawings. The stories are narrated by the various animals and birds. For instance, the story entitled "The Travellers," told by the Quail, gives an account of the habits and journeyings of these birds from Egypt. The "Modern Library" consists of eight volumes also illustrated with black and white pictures, price 1s. 6d. each. The new volume this year is entitled *Shakespeare Stories for Boys and Girls*. The illustrations are excellent and the letterpress is simply written. The other books in this series which we recommend are: *Famous Heroes, Forest Treasure, Alice in Wonderland, and Ivanhoe*.

**Talks to Children.**—*The Bible Zoo*, by the Rev. W. A. Cunningham Craig, may be specially mentioned as useful not only for Lessons in Sunday School to little children, but for use in the home. All children love animals and will always listen to stories about them, and this book will certainly enlist their interest in some well-known Bible stories by directing their attention to some of the animals that are spoken of as taking part in them. One practical moral and no more is drawn from each story, and the book will be found both interesting and instructive. Stamp Albums and Stamps are issued in connection with this book if desired.