

Book Reviews

“REVELATION AND RE-UNION” A RESPONSE TO TAMBARAM.
By G. B. Broomfield, O.B.E., M.A., D.D. S.P.C.K. 7/6.

This new Apologia, from the pen of Canon Broomfield, for the medieval and Tractarian view of the Church and the Ministry, is written as a ‘Response’ to the Tambaram Conference statement on Reunion.

The Author deals most comprehensively with his subject so that one or two of the early chapters seem only remotely relevant to it. He presents his case most ably and charitably with a clear evidence of learning and scholarship, but with more than an occasional and a rather subtle use of the *non sequitur* and *petitio principii*, and not infrequently with pure unsupported assumptions and conjectures. For instance, as we might expect, the functions and authority of the Church, as the guarantor of, or, as our Article puts it, the ‘witness to’ Holy Writ, are fully stressed; and on this ground alone the claim is at once advanced for the Church as the authoritative ‘Teacher’ and ‘Interpreter’ of Scripture, just as if a competent antiquarian and Librarian is thereby qualified to be the authoritative interpreter and exponent of the contents or messages of the books, the date and authenticity of which he may be able to determine. The strength of Dr. Broomfield’s arguments is therefore vitiated by the continuous employment of this faulty premiss. He also neglects Hooker’s warning about the ‘oversights’ committed by failure to observe the difference between “the Church mystical and visible.” For he affirms that we are to rely on the teaching of the Church to “correct and supplement our imperfect conclusions” of God’s Truth, and he defines this ‘Teaching Church’ as “the blessed Company of all faithful people.” But he does not tell us *where* we are to discover the official teaching of this unorganised Mystical Body?

In spite of the fact stressed by Archbishop Whitgift “that no certain manner or form of electing ministers is prescribed in Scripture,” Dr. Broomfield makes a persistent attempt to equate Order with Faith; and he asserts that “the whole conception of the Body of Christ implies a divine plan for the *constitution* of the Church.” But as Hooker well points out; In Scripture “the unity of the Body (or Church) of Christ consists in the acceptance of the ‘one Lord, one Faith and the one Baptism,” and the members of this Body need not in every place have the same precise form of organisation or constitution. One can be presbyterian or oligarchic, another episcopal or monarchic, as was the case in Corinth and Antioch in the early sub-Apostolic period. Further, even if we claim that episcopacy developed under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, this does not necessarily imply that it is essential for the life of the Church, any more than to assert, as Dr. Broomfield does, that the claims of the medieval Papacy (e.g. under Hildebrand) worked out under the guidance or providence of the Holy Spirit for the benefit of the Church at that time, although certainly not essential for its life.

The candid reason which our Author gives for his inability to join in a united Communion Service seems to contradict the statement of our Article XXVI—that the sacraments are not dependent on the type or character of the Minister officiating but that they are “effectual” because of “Christ’s institution and promise.” But Dr. Broomfield declares that the Eucharist is “unreal” unless the “presiding minister be one whose ministry is recognised by the whole Church,” since “the Eucharist is a corporate act of the whole Body of Christ.” But as he certainly does not wish to exclude the Roman Church from the “whole Body of Christ” one wonders how on this basis any Anglican sacrament can possess “reality” for him, since its Ministry is not recognised by the Roman Church?

In spite of the facts which Dr. Broomfield frankly admits, that in the Apostolic Church there was no one divinely ordered form of organisation and that presbyters and bishops were synonymous terms, and that presbyters and Barnabas (not even apostolically ordered) ordained for a considerable “interim period” till episcopacy was established; our Author refuses to allow a similar and shorter “interim use” of presbyterian Orders envisaged in the South India Reunion Scheme. It would, he declares, destroy the “organic unity of the Church.”

One wonders why it did not do this in England when foreign presbyterian Orders were accepted and exercised from 1559-1660, or in Scotland after 1660 when existing presbyterian ministries were recognised in the restored episcopal Church?

He quite rightly states that episcopacy is practically necessary for a Reunited Church. But having asserted that only episcopal ordination is the "rite of ordination," his further statement that the acceptance of a reunited *episcopal* Church "implies no particular theory of episcopacy" is valueless. For this definite denial of non-episcopal ordination, however generously he may coat the pill with sugar, is the price which he demands from non-episcopalians for Reunion.

His chapter on "Christ and Episcopacy" is a laboured and elaborate attempt to prove that Christ Himself founded episcopacy "as part and parcel of His Church" and that an "episcopal ministry is part of our belief in Christ." This dogmatic assertion is based on numerous examples of special pleading, wishful conjectures, and unproved and often very unconvincing and improbable assumptions; while his frank admission that at first the Ministry varied, and that the "Apostles did not draw up a detailed scheme as a pattern to be followed everywhere" at once destroys his whole thesis. Dr. Broomfield's arguments on this point are apparently drawn entirely from Gore's "Church and the Ministry" as he virtually reproduces Gore's naïve explanation of the Alexandrian custom up to 250 A.D., of presbyters appointing and ordaining their Patriarch, by alleging that "the intention of their own ordination *must* have been to confer upon them powers greater than those of ordinary presbyters elsewhere." To complete this bald *patitio principii* assertion, we have only to add the letters "Q.E.D." We are convinced that an impartial study of Church history in Apostolic times will confirm S. Jerome's statement that originally "presbyter is the same as bishop" and that "bishops were above presbyters rather by custom than divine appointment."

No one can doubt the sincerity and keenness of Dr. Broomfield's desire for Christian Unity or the charitable and commendable Christian spirit in which he presents his case, but we must sadly admit that his contribution does not contain anything new which is of real, practical or positive value towards the solution of the Reunion problem. C.S.C.

MIND AND DEITY. GIFFORD LECTURES.

By John Laird, LL.D., F.B.A. George Allen and Unwin Ltd. 10/6.

Since the death of the late Samuel Alexander, Professor John Laird is probably the most distinguished living philosopher in the British Isles and there should be a warm welcome for this fresh and stimulating contribution from a most fertile and logical mind. Some of us have an uneasy feeling that theologians to-day drift too easily into their theology. When we remember that this Second Series of Gifford Lectures by a professional philosopher has as their subject "Mind and Deity," it is apparent that theologues and others must sit up from their dogmatic slumber and take more notice of philosophy. Those who have read the First Series of this present course of Lectures on "Theism and Cosmology" with their conclusion that "The deformity of the world seems to be the most natural conclusion for a realistic limited cosmology to aim at"—and still more those who like the writer of this review have sat at the feet of Dr. John Laird more years ago than they care to remember—will know what to expect in quality from this Second Series. We do not say that these two Series of Gifford Lectures are the most distinguished of this great foundation—few volumes we may prophesy will equal "The Human Situation" by W. Macneile Dixon—but we do assert that this volume and its predecessor represent the most sustained metaphysical argument of the whole Foundation.

As the leader of the Realist School Dr. Laird, appropriately enough, begins his discussion with three chapters on the alleged mind-constituted character of reality, beginning with the Ontological Argument, passing to the Nature of Mind, and concluding with a chapter on "The Implications of Idealism." The moral and intellectual aspects of Divine Personality occupy the next three chapters under the heads of "Omniscience," "Divine Personality" and "Providence." "Value," "The Moral Proofs of Theism" and "Pantheism" with a tenth chapter on "Concluding Reflections" conclude a formidable undertaking.

While this book is not everyone's meat, we are bound to say that few works that have lately been published will provide such a needed catharsis for the

theologizing mind. If the lectures seem barren of constructive and creative conclusions, the answer must be that in philosophical books these are always sadly to seek and secondly that the Scottish verdict of "not proven" is not the barren phrase it so often seems to the mere Sassenach. When we remember that Dr. Laird candidly informs us that he began his great argument with the presupposition that theism was "a decrepit metaphysical vehicle harnessed to poetry"—and still more candidly informs us that he is a stranger to conscious communion with God, we may rest content that with such limitations in advance he can yet conclude with the words "For myself I may say that I did not appreciate the force of theism when I began this enquiry . . . I may even have thought that theism was a decrepit metaphysical vehicle harnessed to poetry, I do not think so now. While I do not think that any theistic proofs establish a high degree of probability, I also incline to the belief that theistic metaphysics is stronger than most, and that metaphysics is not at all weak in principle despite the strain it puts upon the human intellect. It is quite impossible, I believe, to refute theism." Here, surely, is a conclusion worth a shelf full of popular theology. Here is a clearing of the site worth much more than the hastily throwing up of bricks and mortar with "Some Loose Stones" as "Foundations." Many points in these volumes invite and cry out for comment that is out of place here, but we have said enough to indicate not only that Dr. Laird jolts the all too common complacency of the theologizing mind but also that he has given us two books that are quite indispensable to those who can translate impersonalistic theism into the personalistic theism of our God and His Christ. A.B.L.

JESUS NOT A MYTH

By A. D. Howell Smith, B.A.(Cantab.). (Watts and Co.) 15s. net.

Christ is the supreme riddle of human history. It is impossible to explain Him, or to explain Him away. He remains the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, like the sun which is one of His symbols. There may be a vast difference of opinion as to what the sun is when we compare the age of Abraham with the present hour, but its light and heat, without which nothing and nobody could live, remain immutable factors in man's experience. That may be questionable science but its substantial truth suffices as an illustration of the point at issue. Christ is ever the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End, finally and fundamentally a problem which cannot be unravelled. Men, however, are undeterred in their efforts to dispel this mystery of mysteries. The history of speculation furnishes instances of many such efforts which proved to be in vain. Mr. Howell Smith's book deals with one of these, the doctrine that Our Lord had no objective existence. He is the creation of the intellect and imagination like King Arthur or Robin Hood, to use the simplest analogies. The Syrian stars with shining eyes do not look down upon His grave because He never had one. This theory, known as the Christ myth, is not nearly so prominent as it was when it was sponsored by such a brilliant champion as Mr. J. M. Robertson, the famous rationalist and Shakespearean scholar. It has largely been discarded, and Mr. Howell Smith, who devotes this book to its refutation, may thus seem to be pushing an open door. But the work was well worth doing, if for no other reason, because it provides a very clear and readable manual on the subject, furnished with a copious bibliography of English authorities, conservative and liberal. Mr. Smith avows himself to be a rationalist in full accord with Matthew Arnold's dictum that miracles do not happen. He does not commit himself unreservedly to the rationalist position since he agrees with a greater than Matthew Arnold who put the words into the mouth of Hamlet, "there are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamed of in your philosophy." Mr. Smith defines his position as that of a Humanistic Mystic.

The theory that Christ is a myth similar to that which is so common in ethnic religions has never been widely held as the comparative obscurity of its champions prove. Mr. Smith cites the names of several, chiefly those of Robertson, Arthur Drews, Kalthoff, Dujardin and Jensen, as well as the American, William Benjamin Smith. One obvious comment is that the theory has never enlisted the support of outstanding theologians, even of the liberal school. Thus W. B. Smith is a Professor of Mathematics who finds a hobby in the theological studies. "Experto crede" may not be a maxim suited for universal observance but cannot be lightly dismissed.

The contents of the book may best be summarized by the consideration of certain features which are common to almost every chapter. One of these is

that the theory would be impossible apart from the modern critical re-construction of the Old and New Testaments. The older rationalists like Renan and Strauss have tried to rationalize the Christ but they never succeeded in going as far as they would have desired owing to the fact that different theories regarding the nature of the Bible then held sway, but with the rise of modern criticism, it became a much simpler task for liberal students to dispose of what has been so happily designated, the fact of Christ.

Another feature is the omnipresent tendency to magnify the parallels between ethnic religions and Christianity. Many of these are quite unconvincing, and where any resemblance may be traced, it is usually confined to the barest outline. If these have any, they witness to the profound truth that the gospel literally dovetails into human reasoning and experience, God's answer to man's gropings. But the attempts to find the origin of Christian beliefs in such sources seems to be absurd on the face of it in view of the immense differences entailed. A man resembles a monkey, and he differs from a monkey "in toto." There are many and widespread legends of a god dying and rising again but they need only to be compared with the narrative of Our Lord's Resurrection to reveal the immeasurable gulf by which they are separated. That observation may also be applied to Mr. Smith's dismissal of the historicity of that crucial event because so many parallels to it can be found. Phantasms of the dead, whether or no any of them have an objective basis, are indisputable phenomena. Sir Edward Burnett has collected one hundred cases—not all of them really belong to this category—in his "Apparitions and Haunted Houses" (p. 189). When once the historic reality of Christ is challenged seriously, there seems to be no limit to the lengths to which this school will go. Thus Edward Dujardin traces the origin of the Christ myth to a Palestinian God, Jesus, originally a totemistic eel worshipped in pre-historic ages. Traces of this cult are said to survive in the references to the serpent in Genesis iii. Such a thing is purely nothing more or less than wishful thinking. The needed corrective is supplied by Mr. Smith himself with regard to all such hypotheses when he observes that the historicity of Jesus is absolutely essential to explain the emergence of Christianity in the first century. Everything demands a sufficient cause, and that is true of the gospel of grace. Its origin is of a piece with its consummation just as the acorn is the embryo of the oak. The mightiest fabric of love and logic known to man must have been unique in its beginnings, as in its development, and in its goal.

Other reflections clamour for mention but they can only be stated with the briefest comment. One is that, like so many other unorthodox doctrines, the theory of the Christ myth rests on isolated texts, and passages. Other Scriptural statements are ignored. They are not even considered in their bearing on the thesis which it is attempted to establish. Again one is disposed to query the underlying estimate of the Jewish mentality in the first century and before. It is judged to be capable of evolving and accepting the Christ myth. That is a poor estimate of the ability of men like Peter and Paul. I am reminded of the man who said that he preferred to err with Plato than to agree with the rest of mankind. This argument is double-edged. It not only degrades the intelligence of the N.T. writers, but it unduly flatters them. We are asked to believe that they were capable of inventing the Christ myth. It is surely easier to believe in the historicity of Christ. Water cannot rise higher than its own level, nor can genius. Napoleon knew better when he said that he understood men but Christ must be more than man. If the authors of the New Testament were capable of inventing Christ, then fiction could be stronger and stranger than truth. One final observation on the presuppositions of Mr. Smith's admirable survey is that the New Testament narratives are first class authorities for the events of which they tell. There are no historians or biographers like the Four Evangelists, and there the matter may be left.

H. S. CURR.

THE NATURE OF CATHOLICITY

By Daniel T. Jenkins. pp. 171. 5/- net. Faber and Faber.

This is a very striking work, coming as it does from the pen of a Non-conformist, and one which, if we are not mistaken, will have considerable effect upon all future discussions of Re-union. It approaches the vast problem of Re-union from a new angle and is the outcome of a fresh and vigorous mind well versed in modern theology and not too fettered by acquired or inherited prejudices. In many respects the book is a direct outcome of recent theological tendencies on the continent combined with the fresh emphasis on Churchmanship in our own

country. The author is thoroughly conversant with the more modern conceptions of the Catholic Church which have emerged in recent years and which are associated with the names of Ramsey, Hebert, Mackinnon and others. And he is quick to notice that certain of these views make "discussion with modern Reformist Churchmen possible at once." Hence presumably the present work. But the writer's susceptibilities to modern trends of thought do not end here. It is another of those, apparently an increasing number, to be influenced by the writings of the late Sir Edwyn Hoskyns to which there are many appreciative references, particularly to his great Commentary on the Fourth Gospel.

The book, therefore, differs from many recent discussions on the problem of Re-union in that it turns aside from a discussion of accidentals to what is essential and fundamental. And amongst the accidentals the author would apparently be prepared to place such things as the doctrines of Apostolic Succession or the Real Presence. Not because he regards them as unessential but because so long as there is a basic disagreement on the theological approach to these doctrines it is hopeless to go on discussing them. Indeed, as a matter of fact, the author believes profoundly in an Apostolic Succession, only it is a succession of testimony rather than any special transmission of grace (*cf.* p.23 *fole*). For the author conceives that "the acid test of the catholicity of any doctrine was always 'Is it the teaching of the Apostles?'" In his view, what constitutes the Apostle "is not their faith . . . or any special charismata . . . but their *testimony*." Perhaps on this aspect of the volume the key is to be found on p. 28: "Since, then, apostolicity is the mark of catholicity, and the Apostle is what he is in virtue of his testimony to the risen Christ, the test of a church's catholicity is always whether its testimony to Jesus Christ is the same as that of the Apostles 'the eye-witnesses of His Majesty.'"

One of the entertaining features of the work is that the Author has a keen eye for the weak spots of other churches and not least of his own. This makes him a keen if balanced critic of the Roman Catholic Church, the weakness of whose theological position he makes abundantly clear, and we would commend to the readers what he says on pp. 76-7. It is something which needs to be said and said plainly at the present time.

In what may be described as the key-chapter, ch. iii., the author appears to find the fundamental principle of Catholicism in the historic phrase *Ubi Christus, ibi ecclesia*, and stresses the way in which exponents of traditional Catholicism fail to see that "the presence of Jesus Christ alone (is) the primary mark of the Church's catholicity." This is certainly a fresh attempt to work from the centre outwards rather than from the circumference inwards. Amongst much that is good in the chapter is the author's criticism of the pre-occupation of the Roman Church with Natural Theology, and he traces its logical development in heresy hunting, bigotry and arrogance. He regards it as an attempt "to set up another source of knowledge of God alongside Jesus Christ and thus threatens His Lordship."

Another engaging feature of the book which adds to its interest though it increases its provocative character, is the manner in which the author criticizes impartially but resolutely, institutions, ideas and events. Thus he has little to say by way of appreciation for *Essays: Catholic and Critical* which, with the exception, as we should expect, of Hoskyn's *Essay*, he describes as being neither Catholic nor Critical. The Doctrinal Report of the Church of England has some scathing remarks made upon it mainly on account of its theological obscurantism and unedifying compromises! Modernism receives whole-hearted condemnation, as one would expect from a book with such dogmatic pre-suppositions. And it is on the basis of these pre-suppositions that the writer feels able apparently to state that all "the different branches of the Church of England" are "living in a state of open sin,"—a statement which we venture to predict will cause astonishment to some!

There are many other points, such as the writer's observations on E. L. Mascall's recent articles, to which one would like to draw attention but the reader must discover these for himself. It is only necessary to add that any future discussion on Re-union will have to take account of this book. C. J. O.

IN HIS IMAGE

By Bede Frost. pp. 224. 8/6. A. R. Mowbray and Co.

It is an interesting and highly significant fact that at the moment when life was never held more cheaply or when greater cruelty was being inflicted by man upon

man as never before in history, books should be coming increasingly from the Press on the Doctrine of Man. Many will no doubt be reading Dr. Niebuhr's Gifford Lectures, the second volume of which is eagerly awaited. And here in this volume, written from a very definite standpoint, we have a very helpful treatise on this vitally important theme. It may be that many readers of *THE CHURCHMAN* will be unacquainted with the writings of the Author who is, as is well known, a member of an English Religious Order. And naturally there is much in the book that readers will disagree with, and perhaps violently disagree with, but on the other hand there is much in it which is well worth pondering by members of all schools of thought. For a strong dose of sound orthodoxy can be no harm in these days and Bede Frost is nothing if not strictly orthodox. Furthermore it should be remembered that he is a staunch supporter of Scholastic Philosophy as represented by its greatest representative, St. Thomas Aquinas. Within these limits the guidance of the Author on fundamental doctrines is healthy and invigorating. But this is not an easy book to read and it would certainly come under St. Paul's category of "strong meat." It is not exactly a book for the fire-side and it is hardly a work for the busy preacher who has very little time for reflection and careful thought.

The Author commences with a discussion of certain fundamental problems preliminary to an understanding of the main principles underlying the Christian doctrine of man. In the course of these introductory chapters he goes very deeply into those principles which are implicit in the Biblical doctrine, that man was made "in the image of God." It would of course be impossible in a strictly limited space to attempt to summarize his argument or present the gist of his reasoning. But there are one or two observations we should like to make for the benefit of those readers who might otherwise hesitate to embark on this volume.

Firstly, though some may have no great liking for Scholasticism as representing an outworn and discredited philosophic system, yet they will be surprised to find how deeply versed our Author is in the Holy Scriptures. No one could know his Bible, or at all events his New Testament, better or quote it more aptly. It is refreshing to find so close an adherence to the words of Scripture.

Secondly, there is much in the book, particularly in its latter part, which should be of great assistance to preachers and teachers. For our Author never hesitates to express his own opinion clearly and emphatically. He realizes that sin lies at the bottom of so many of our troubles. "The providence of God," he writes, "does not fail His creatures; man alone is responsible for every lack of the necessities of decent human life, a traitor betraying his brethren . . ." But it is in some of the Author's more theological passages that we see him at his best: for example he has some illuminating remarks on the Love of God which must have an intellectual basis even more than an emotional one, though that is often forgotten. "For it does not consist in emotions but in willed choices and acts. 'If a man love Me he will keep My words. . . .' This is the reason why love for God can be commanded, . . . whilst human love cannot be commanded."

The Author has much of value to say on the subject of Worship—a matter of the greatest importance at this time. "Worship," he writes, "is an imperative, an obligation, a duty, not the effect of an emotion, sentiment, or an act directed towards one's own good. . . . Worship dictated by mere feeling, a 'nice' rather than a necessary and proper thing to do, or from some selfish motive of 'getting good' for oneself, hardly deserves the name." This is certainly an aspect of the subject that deserves the most careful consideration. So also does his outspoken definition of the distinction between two great conceptions of Worship prevalent to-day. "The fundamental distinction lies in the fact that the Protestant conception demands a fitness to worship, whilst the Church recognizes a capacity, a duty, and a need, even in the greatest sinner."

But however much one may feel disposed to disagree with the Writer of this really valuable treatise, few will disagree with what he says on the future. "The new world of a just social and economic order, of which we hear so much to-day, can never be the consequence merely of changed conditions, but only of changed men, men of changed minds and desires. . . . Peace but corrodes, as war destroys, until the peace of God reigns in men's hearts, and recognizing within themselves the divine image, they see it no less clearly in every other man. . . ."

The Christian doctrine of Man is highly relevant to the present world situation. It is the world's neglect of it that has produced the chaotic and disastrous condition which confronts mankind to-day. Every book therefore that can

help to impress upon this generation the vital importance of the Christian view of man is of value, and amongst such this volume should take a high place.

C.J.O.

THE CONQUEST OF DISABILITY

By J. C. Hardwick. (*Student Christian Movement Press*). 2/-.

To get a book published in these days needs some justification. Here is one that absolutely fills the bill. To anyone worried with a "thorn in the flesh" comes this offer of a manual of very practical guidance by a man who does not profess to be a psychologist (he does not even mention the word) yet has compressed within these 63 pages far more valuable advice to fellow-sufferers than could generally be found within a pre-war 5/- book three times the size.

The theme of the writer is that whereas a healthy whole man might be able to "afford" to ignore many of the finer qualities of the soul and mind by the force of his outward circumstances, his exercise and other diversions and fellowships, one with any disability (bodily or otherwise) needs more than ever to develop the spiritual and mental capacity to enable him to adjust his life and outlook to "compensate himself by having more control over his mind and its thinking than the able-bodied have" (p.49).

The first part deals with this subject in a positive and useful manner with chapters on Strain, Being of Use, Occupation, Nerves, etc., leading up to a most intriguing chapter on "the Question of Religion" which, *inter alia*, emphasizes the need for all—and especially the disabled—to realize that prayer is not merely petitioning for material gain: the active joining up with God (we refer to meditation) will enable him to "feel that the dominant forces are on his side, that is to say, on the side of mind against matter, of will against circumstance" (p.55). Not that individual petitions are barred, for 4 pages further on there is a reference to Mark 11. 24, which I, too, always take from the Revisers' reading, "Believe that ye have received them and ye shall have them," which would encourage the disabled to obtain at least patience and courage if the "thorn" be not removed, in which case it would not loom so large upon their horizon or make them inclined to get discouraged and feel their lives are not much use.

I think this, too, is good: "Prayer is a power that can be proved by experience"; let not our friend wait until he can explain its theory or foundation, for "it will open up a new world to him."

A most excellent two shillingworth that is well worth buying a few at a time, as I shall do, to pass on to suitable cases, which to my mind covers not only the author's disabled in body but also the much larger field of those suffering from an inferiority complex, which, after all, equals a group of people disabled in thought who badly need a wider outlook which dwells less upon self and more upon the Living God.

F.N.D.

IT CAN HAPPEN HERE

By the Bishop of Chelmsford. (*Hodder and Stoughton* 3/6).

Many of those who have had the privilege of reading the Bishop of Chelmsford's clear and courageous messages in the Chelmsford Diocesan Gazettes on the War situation during the last two or three years have often been stimulated by his clear and lucid grasp of the present situation and many have come to regard him as a reliable prophet.

This estimate will be enhanced by his recent book "It Can Happen Here." The book endeavours (successfully we believe) to show:

- (a) Why the present War came about.
- (b) Why France fell.
- (c) Why Germany has been able to achieve so much.
- (d) The danger which faces the British people at the present time.
- (e) How the dangers may be overcome and the Empire emerge stronger in every way as a result of the War.

The author deals with the general falling away from institutional Christianity prevalent during pre-war years and points out the hollowness of the religion of easy tolerance devoid of all imperative and spiritual ideals which tended to replace it.

As we should expect, the Bishop deplors the modern substitute which implies that humanity possesses a self-regenerating power and quotes, by contrast, the great distinctive and essential core of the teaching of the Christian Religion.

"We believe that Thou shalt come to be our Judge. We therefore pray Thee, help Thy servants whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy Precious Blood."

The Bishop claims very properly that it is the Christian Religion which has built up our national character. He points out that decay of national character always followed upon decline of national religion and instances the weak kneed policy of playing for safety even at the cost of principle both by ourselves and many of the nations of Europe during recent years.

The author sees in the War a definite clash of Spirit-forces in which Satan and all his host are arrayed against the principles of the Christian faith and Germany's success so far is due to the fact that her power is spiritual (spiritual forces can be evil just as there can be and is a spiritual force of goodness).

France fell, says the author, because she lacked spiritual power. Germany triumphed over her because she possessed it (though it is surely the power of an evil spirit).

Of Hitler he writes—"Hitler was and is possessed of an evil spirit. He gave Germany what she had lost—a faith to live by."

"With satanic genius he lit the spiritual flame in the hearts of his cowed, broken and hopeless people. Germany arose from its gloom and despair to follow the crooked cross of Hitler's faith."

Love of country is a sacred thing but Hitler twisted it into a fiendish thing, lying, knaving, brutality—the very spawn of Satan.

The real German impetus came from the soul of a nation bound together by a common faith and fired with the fanatic zeal which only religion can give—an impetus which can be checked only by a greater and purer force of a like character.

Can England attain to that finer, nobler Spiritual force which is the only guarantee of success? Where there is no vision the people perish and the author, by illustrating from the experience of unhappy France, and of our own recent spiritual decline (of which he gives many evidences) chooses his title "It can happen here."

No serious right minded Englishman would wish that to happen here which has happened in Germany, nor that which has befallen France, and so calls us back to the way of Recovery.

This must be by fearless witness, aggression (the Church slogan for each of its members to be "Do the work of an Evangelist"), living dangerously, taking risks.

We are called to be a Missionary Church to a non-Christian nation—to evangelise the multitude of non-Churchgoers.

The author even recommends a simple evangelistic non-liturgical service for Sunday evenings.

The training of our children must be in the hands of Christians only.

We thank the Bishop for his challenging book and would like to see a copy in every Men's Club, Reading Room and certainly in every Church Library in the land. T.A.

A CHRISTIAN BASIS FOR THE POST-WAR WORLD

A COMMENTARY ON THE TEN PEACE POINTS.

Various Contributors. S.C.M. Press.

The Convocation of York gave its approval, in June, 1941, to the letter which appeared from leaders of the Churches in England in *The Times* of December 21st, 1940, outlining Ten Peace Points for consideration, preparatory to the looked-for peace when the war is over. The five points of Pope Pius XII. were accepted, and to them were added five standards by which economic situations and proposals might be tested. There are twelve contributors to the volume, including Archbishop Temple, the Bishop of Carlisle, and, among the rest, three Roman Catholics. Sympathetic as one might wish to be to the project, one senses an atmosphere of unreality in this symposium; and a great number of critical questions will be asked by readers. Remembering Abyssinia, also that Italy is in the war, and that the Vatican has recognised Japan since her entry into the war, opinions from Rome will naturally be accepted with reserve; these thoughts will recur again and again as the book is read. As a commentary on the Ten Points, which the Convocation of York intended it to be, the book is admirable. Yet the atmosphere of unreality remains. E.H.

CHRISTIAN REALISM

By John C. Bennett. (S.C.M. Press). 6/-.

The writer has expanded and re-written his Council Lectures at the General Council of Congregational Christian Churches (of the U.S.A.) in August, 1940, and other lectures to produce a book of which the later chapters are not easy reading. Some of his expressed opinions are definitely unscriptural.

To Britishers, chapter one (Our New Situation) is interesting on account of the friendly American author's belief (at the time of writing) that nothing could prevent Germany gaining the victory and consolidating her tyrannous power.

He stresses the rapid descent from the High Hopes after the last war, to the spirit of hopelessness of the present time, but states that "Lies have a way of cancelling each other at the end."

Chapter two is entitled "God and His Activity," with four sub-heads.

- (a) God is the Creator.
- (b) God is the God of Righteousness.
- (c) God is the Lord of history.
- (d) God is the Redeemer.

"Man and His Possibilities" is the title of chapter three. Here the writer is definitely unscriptural, and sceptical. He states, "The Christian understanding of man consists primarily of the following two affirmations. First, that man is made in the image of God; and, second that man is a fallen creature. Historically those two affirmations have been carried by a scheme of doctrine which is now untenable. This scheme involved belief in the creation of the original man in a state of perfection and in his fall as an event in time. Our knowledge of the development of man leaves no place for such a perfect state or for such an event as the fall. Moreover, the idea of the fall from a state of perfection is a psychological monstrosity!"

Mr. Bennett sums up the chapter thus. "This problem of living together in an interdependent world with all the resources of science for creation and destruction in our hands is essentially a new problem and theologians have no right to assert that it cannot be solved."

Chapter four is headed, "Christians in Society." The writer's study of pacifism is a sincere and broad one, which will be accepted and endorsed by most people. He shows that "Pacifism does not provide a short cut to Christian decision in all situations."

"The Movement of Redemption" is the title of chapter five, sub-divided under (a) Christ, and (b) the Church.

On pages 137 and 138 Mr. Bennett asserts, "All that we know of the event (the resurrection) is that visions of Christ after His death were the means by which the disciples became assured of what was essentially true!"

He is on much firmer ground when he says (p.142), "I believe that this tendency to neglect the Jesus of history threatens Christianity with a great perversion."

His criticisms of the Church are sincere and helpful. "Christian Realism" is not a book for the simple Christian, but rather for Professors at Theological Colleges, and a few real students.

H.H.D.

THE VOCATION OF ENGLAND

By Maurice B. Reckitt and J. V. Langmead Casserley. Longmans, Green and Co. 173pp. Price 5/-.

A visitor from Mars might be surprised to note that, in the heat of the most titanic conflict in human history, the accredited spokesmen of each of the nations chiefly concerned claim a special divinely-appointed mission and destiny. Theology goes a great deal deeper, of course, than some of us recognise, and much depends upon the kind of God that captures man's imagination and loyalty! The book before us, one of the most readable and stimulating of war-time productions, is inspired by the conviction that neither the past nor the future of "this England" is unrelated to the purpose of "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." "Providence has singled out this land and people to be the organ of the world's unity and continuity. It is a chastening thought, if also an inspiring one. What sort of a people must the English become if they are to bear such burdens as these?" That, arising out of a particular attitude to the past and to the future, is the challenge and the problem of the present.

That all is well with the spirit of England our authors are very far from believing. "Indefensible injustices . . . have exasperated the modern masses

... ubiquitous mediocrity has wickened the modern soul" and "we must return to wrestle once more with the enemies within the gates," as soon as the present tyranny is overpast. Indeed, we must face the issues *now* or we shall not be ready to tackle the problems *then*. For only a nation so spiritually renewed as to welcome, not merely tolerate, major adjustments in her total life can "act as a bridge . . . across which all that is best in the Old World order, which is almost trampled to death beneath the feet of the warriors, can pass over into whatever New World order is to take its place."

Most of us are vaguely conscious that "things cannot be the same after the war." It is the chief merit of the present book that, with insight and courage, it helps us to see the broad areas of national life wherein radical adjustments, long overdue, may wisely be planned. The two successive chapters which deal with rural and urban life in modern England are probably the best in the book, and will repay careful study. England's countryside must find her own inalienable place in the life of her people—no longer regarded as the merely pretty part where there doesn't happen to be a town! Her towns must cease to be aggregations of industrialised hordes. Nothing less than "a drastic reconstruction of town-life and a revolutionary re-vitalisation of rural-life" will meet the case. And if such a vision is to be realised, it will need far more than pious lip-service. Economic problems must be faced and tackled, with a spirit and a will directed toward making the common people "free as well as merely secure."

Human freedom in any land is an issue at once economic and spiritual. To face this in a sane and practical fashion the closing chapters of the book are written. Nothing is more necessary than that the Christian people of this land, and particularly of its established Church, should recognize the responsibility that they must bear and the part that they must play. A vague nominal Christianity, self-conscious only as a sort of pick-me-up for the frayed nerves of the nation's life, simply will not do! But neither, for a different reason, will the kind of national Church which, with an almost touching naïveté, our authors seem compelled exclusively to contemplate. This is our one point of serious departure from agreement with a book which deserves to be read by all who are concerned with England's future and England's mission, and not least by Evangelicals. It may be useful, at times, to sing "There'll always be an England." It is always more useful to ask "What kind of England will it be?"

T.W.I.

EACH LOOKING AHEAD.

... AND GOODWILL AMONG MEN

By W. W. Simpson. Epworth Press. 6d.

THE CHRISTIAN SOCIAL ORDER

By J. Stevenson. Individualist Bookshop, Ltd. 6d.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF PEACE

R. W. Matthews. Eyre and Spottiswoode. 2/6.

Each of these three publications looks ahead to the days of peace and reconstruction.

The first consists of the published text of the broadcasts from October 13th to 18th, 1941, in the "Lift Up Your Hearts" series. There is much more in these talks than in the platitudes we occasionally hear in this series.

The second is of a different order, and many readers will doubtless be more disturbed than helped by it; for the impression left is the view that a Christian Social Order is considered as either impossible or improbable of realisation. After a carefully reasoned opening, the author passes to his real task—a very critical examination of the Malvern Manifestos. We wish that the author had been as thorough in construction as he has been in investigation.

The third, that from the pen of the Dean of St. Paul's, is a splendid contribution to the subject, and will demand attention from all. The Dean is well aware of the difficulties facing those whose task it will be to guide the rebuilding of the world: "History will take its way in spite of the academic idealist who would dig a channel for its course." He covers such topics as Christian Presuppositions, underlying Factors of the Problem, the League, the British Commonwealth, Pillars of the World, (readers will compare this section with Eric Linklater's "Cornerstones"), an International Police Force, Germany's Future, and the further issues of a higher end of life. Here is a book which ought to be studied by all who would have a deeper insight into the issues involved in this matter of reconstruction.

E.H.