

Book Reviews

KING AND MESSIAH.

By *Aage Bentzen*. Lutterworth Press. pp. 118. 10/6.

In some respects Bentzen was the Scandinavian H. H. Rowley : one who could comprehensively record and very fairly assess the theological debate in which he himself was a participant. His own hope of this book was, in his words, " that it might serve as some sort of information on contemporary Scandinavian discussions and that my own statements might carry our work on the Old Testament forward. . . ." It achieves exactly this, for it is no mere catalogue of theological positions : it draws us into a discussion which is on the move ; we get the feel of it, and inhale for ourselves the strong theological air of the Baltic, where it is always New Year's Day.

This is the author's own translation, with some revision of both the text and the extensive notes, of the book published in 1948 in German as *Messias—Moses Redivivus—Menschensohn*. The earlier title gives a clue to the treatment of the subject, which consists of an examination of, first, the Messianic passages of the Psalms and Prophets, then the prophecies of the Servant (regarded as Moses Redivivus), and lastly the vision of the Son of Man ; all in the light of the alleged Enthronement Ritual, but all held to derive from something more primitive than kingship—for Bentzen differs from Engnell in regarding the idea, not of the King but of the Patriarch or First Man, as the unity behind the diversity of Messianic thought.

It is one of the practical merits of the Scandinavian absorption with sacral kingship, that it has reinstated (but in the name of science rather than faith) the supernatural attributes of the Messianic king which an earlier science of criticism had disallowed. It is now well known that among Israel's neighbours the king tended to be made a semi-divine link between his people and the gods. Comparative religion therefore predisposes the present-day scholar to take the Messiah's transcendental titles seriously. Psalms xlv and cx mean all that they say ; Micah v. 2 expresses more than the platitude that David was not born yesterday ; Isaiah ix. 6 is again allowed to name the Child " God Almighty ".

Another attraction of this approach is that it suggests common ground for apparently opposite or unrelated Messianic ideas. If in the annual enthronement rites the king underwent a symbolic humiliation, death and resurrection as son of the god, then it is easy to envisage the Messiah as at once Davidic and divine, suffering and exalted, all within the same context of kingship. And if the fundamental Messianic figure is not the king but the *Urmensch*, then the new David, the new Moses (the Servant) and the new Adam (Son of Man) can be regarded not as three unrelated conceptions but as " three aspects of a totality which in different ages have been accentuated in different ways ".

Does this interpretation rest on a fiction? Bentzen is ready to confess the indirectness of the evidence. " The ritual of the Enthronement Festival is not described anywhere in the Old Testament, and

the 'ritual pattern' of the Near East is nowhere found in its complete form. It is, in fact, an admittedly hypothetical reconstruction". But he can point to similarities between features of certain Israelite psalms and of the liturgies of other religions, with the implication that both belong to similar cultic situations. There are also signs of pretensions to divine kingship among some of the kings of Israel.

For all this light on the mental climate of the times we can be grateful. But we cannot make these ideas the source of Messianic prophecy without doing violence to the Old (and New) Testament. The biblical witness is that the bulk of the Messianic psalms were psalms of David: that is, that their earthly starting-point was not a kingly ritual of combat and enthronement but the actual sufferings and triumph of David and the covenant of sonship of 2 Sam. vii. From this basis of experience and promise David wrote, "in the Spirit," of the transcendent sufferings and exaltation of his "Lord" (being, as Peter says, a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him concerning the Christ). Nevertheless the language that expressed these things may well have been to a great extent ready-fashioned for the revelation. We know, from *e.g.* Hosea ii and John i, that God does not scorn to take up and transform the thought-forms of heathendom.

This is not a book for the general reader. But for those who want an intimate glimpse of the contemporary discussion of a central theme of the Old Testament, it could hardly be bettered.

F. D. KIDNER.

HISTORY, PROPHECY, AND GOD.

By Robert Randall. Paternoster Press. pp. 127. 8/6.

Every book has two aspects—the contents, and the manner of their presentation. In the book before us the present reviewer has nothing but praise for the contents, but does not consider that the presentation is good. It is hoped, indeed, that the form of presentation will not obscure the message of the book; and that the very title will not chill off possible readers. For it is a book that deserves to be read. It reveals an author of wide sympathies, deep understanding, and charitable outlook.

The book is about the Bible. It shows us that the Bible is truly an inspired book, because it is manifestly "wiser than men". Considering the vast period over which the writings are spread, there is a continuity, a progression, and a unity both in the history and the prophecy of the Bible which is astonishing. It is well to bring the minds of theological students back to these distinctive marks of the Bible. Critical study of the Scriptures, which has dominated our divinity schools for half a century, has caused many not to see the wood for the trees. And to be reminded—or had we better say, have pointed out to us?—that there is an underlying unity, continuity and progression in the Scriptures (a fact which would have been hardly worthy of notice by a pre-critical writer), is just what is needed to-day; it is fresh news again. The wheel has gone full circle. This book proclaims this news to our generation, and many of us will welcome it, and all readers must acknowledge its validity. If the book had been

called "The Nature of the Biblical Revelation", it might have indicated more clearly what it was all about. Mr. F. F. Bruce, of Sheffield, who writes a foreword, and thereby commends the book to us by his willingness to be associated with it, says: "Here is a man who has thought long and deeply on the character of the Biblical revelation, and has something worthwhile to say about it".

Any book about the Bible is at once intellectually stimulating and spiritually uplifting. This book kindles both thought and devotion. Here are three quotations as samples:

In the book of Ecclesiastes we have a reasoned exposition of this naturalistic philosophy, worked out to its logical conclusion. Not that Ecclesiastes is a divinely-authenticated world-view of things! Rather is it a formal presentation of a fallacious creed of life considered on its own principles. The viewpoint under discussion is not endorsed but described. But because justice is done to it, and its supporting facts presented soberly and accurately, we may be assured that the uncompromising attitude of Christian faith to all rival philosophies does not spring from ignorance or prejudice (p. 37).

All revealed truth retains an element of unfathomable mystery as well as of unmistakable disclosure, so that the certainty of faith is mingled with the wonder of worship, and leads to ultimate humility of mind (p. 110).

To belong to the chosen people was salvation: to be excommunicated from them was to be cast out from God's presence. This instinctive hold upon community was retained by early believers in New Testament times, and found its satisfaction in the fellowship of the Church (p. 120).

And so this book leads us to see the Church in the Bible—a vision which has never really been absent from evangelical thought, but which is clearer to-day than in past decades. This is a good thing; and we need the contribution of out-and-out evangelicals in the framing of our ecclesiastical policy to-day; or else we shall once again repeat the mistake of exalting the outward, at the expense of the inward spiritual, meaning of the Church.

W. C. G. PROCTOR.

DEMYTHOLOGIZING AND HISTORY.

By F. Gogarten. Tr. N. Horton Smith. S.C.M. Press. pp. 92.
7/6.

We must be grateful to the S.C.M. Press for giving English readers another sample of the current "demythologization" controversy. Gogarten's contribution was first published in 1953 under the title *Entmythologisierung und Kirche*, and the author himself has made certain changes for this first English edition, which has been very ably translated in view of the nature of the subject matter. Gogarten himself, of course, is Professor of Theology at Gottingen.

As the author sees it, the basic problem in this whole controversy is that of the interpretation of history. His first discussion, on the Bible, is ordinary enough, but it indicates the way in which Gogarten's thought is moving. He then makes the suggestion that a historical approach itself derives from a Christian view of man's responsibility

in sin. Medieval and modern interpretation of history are studied in rather great detail, and from this investigation there emerges Gogarten's important contention, that in different ways they are both the prey of metaphysical conceptions.

But this is also true, as Gogarten sees it, of the official theology which attempts to take the historicity of Christianity seriously. For at bottom it rests on a subject-object concept or pattern which is not, strictly speaking, Christian at all, but philosophical. Gogarten inclines to the existentialist solution of Bultmann for the very reason that it breaks right away from this pattern. Bultmann is not really a "subjectivist". He does not think in terms of subjectivity and objectivity at all. He has worked back to an understanding of the essential nature of history and tries to see the historical character of the New Testament revelation accordingly.

This basic contention of Gogarten is a challenging one. It is far too easy to slip into the phraseology which happens to be the fashion, and not to ask whether it has any scriptural basis. And it may well be the case that preoccupation with the factuality of the New Testament events in a historicist sense indicates a basic misunderstanding of the Christian message.

On the other hand, Gogarten's final conclusions are not convincing. His statement on the theology of demythologization suffers too much from an etymologizing which is no doubt clever and interesting but conveys no real message in English. Even worse, it is dominated by the philosophy of Heidegger, and unless, as Gogarten seems to believe, the writings of Heidegger are a statement of the essential New Testament view, he is guilty of exactly the same error as his opponents.

Indeed, this is obviously true, for in some incomprehensible way Gogarten manages to discuss the whole problem with hardly a mention of the Holy Spirit. To think in genuine New Testament categories is to see that, after all, what are called the objective facts correspond to the incarnation of the Word in Jesus Christ, and the atoning action accomplished in Him; and that the so-called subjective application is linked with the outpouring and work of the Holy Spirit. The terms objective and subjective are, perhaps, inadequate and misleading. And there can be no question of proving (or of course disproving) by ordinary historical analysis the atonement or the incarnation. But there is no particular fidelity to the New Testament or to Christ incarnate in depreciating that which was actually done in Palestine in the first century A.D.

Of course, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit belong and work together. Of course, the Word is now a word written and preached in the power of the Spirit. Of course, the word has come to me and to all men. If this were all that Bultmann wished to emphasize, and he would use New Testament language, there would be no controversy, and Heidegger's in their own way, no doubt, very important obscurities need not worry us. But is this all that Bultmann wants? Does he not want to justify a lurking disbelief in the Gospel narratives, and pretending that, after all, it is only a greater and purer faith, that he believes the word addressed to him in and with and under the historical Jesus, but not the historical Jesus Himself? We can learn indeed from Gogarten's

acute and searching questions. But we suggest that Gogarten's work, too, be subjected to a biblical analysis and reconstructed in biblical categories. It is difficult to think that a great deal of his thesis would remain. But in so far as it is a thesis which, positively, obscures rather than advances a genuine biblical understanding, this would be no great cause either for surprise or for regret. G. W. BROMLEY.

INTERPRETING PAUL'S GOSPEL.

By A. M. Hunter. S.C.M. Press. pp. 139. 10/6.

There is a danger that the present concern with what is known as "the problem of communication" may encourage an ignoring of part of the Gospel which ought to be communicated. Long before there was much awareness of the problem it was the fashion to say that Paulinism is no part of the Gospel. In spite of more recent New Testament scholarship a widespread suspicion of St. Paul's doctrine remains and there are far too many accredited Christian teachers who attempt to justify their superficial approach to it by quoting the saying in II Peter that in all Paul's epistles there are "some things hard to be understood". *Interpreting Paul's Gospel* has been written in part to remove misunderstandings of St. Paul and encourage the preaching of his message. Dr. Hunter is in no way inclined to endorse all Paul's ideas but he claims that "the main lines of his theology stand firm, and we no less than his first converts may make that theology our own" (p. 16).

Nearly half of the book is devoted to a description of "the Gospel according to St. Paul", taking salvation as the key thought. It is treated as a past event, as a present experience and as a future hope. The account is concluded with a chapter entitled "The Saviour".

Dr. Hunter is clear that "Paul's thought often requires translation into terms appropriate to the middle of the twentieth century" (p. 14), but in interpreting "the Gospel according to St. Paul for to-day" he does not in any way reduce it. The main themes are present—our human predicament, the way of deliverance, newness of life, the hope of glory—but it is also made clear that we cannot dispense with, for example, the wrath of God and justification by faith, the Church and the sacraments, demons and the parousia. Neither the individual nor the corporate, neither grace nor the good life is minimized and the whole presentation is well illustrated and made contemporary.

It is inevitable that in a short and simple survey of this kind some issues should not be fully discussed. If, for example, the word 'penal' is to be applied to Paul's doctrine of atonement it requires more careful definition than Dr. Hunter gives it, particularly when he suggests that justification by faith can best be interpreted "in the language of personal relations" (p. 87). Does not St. Paul fail to apply legal categories in a thorough-going manner to God's way of reconciling man to himself? Dr. Hunter's pleasing and persuasive work raises questions of this kind, besides making Paul's Gospel come alive, and readers of it might well go on or go back for further reading to J. S. Stewart's *A Man in Christ* and C. A. Anderson Scott's *Christianity according to St. Paul*, to which Dr. Hunter is greatly indebted. Some of the quotations are valuable signposts to further reading and many of them could with great profit be read in their context. C. W. J. BOWLES.

HOMOSEXUALITY AND THE WESTERN CHRISTIAN TRADITION

By D. S. Bailey. Longmans. pp. 181. 15/-.

Dr. Bailey has handled a difficult subject in a soberly factual manner. It is unlikely that the more sensational Sunday papers will have found much to quote from it, unless certain opinions are taken out of their contexts. The book was prepared as a contribution to the researches of an informal group of clergymen and doctors. The author takes us through the Biblical attitude to homosexual practice, and then, by way of Roman law, to the teaching and opinion of the Church, with a further chapter on the Medieval situation. Finally we have a full outline of the law in England, followed by the author's own conclusions.

What is the practical significance of this factual review? Dr. Bailey's aim is twofold. First, he wants to find out how far the beliefs of past days are to govern our attitude to homosexuality to-day. May we, in fact, make a distinction between perversion and inversion? Is homosexuality itself a "crime"? And, if it shows itself in homosexual acts, are all those acts equally reprehensible? Secondly, Dr. Bailey is concerned to show that the Church cannot fairly be regarded as more responsible than the State for a rigorist attitude towards homosexuals.

Dr. Bailey presents his case persuasively, though one feels that his interpretation of the Sodom incident is not so convincing as he would like to think. Even though he produces clear evidence that the homosexual interpretation of the sin for which Sodom was destroyed does not appear until the second century B.C., it is still reasonable to hold that the act attempted in Gen. xix. 5 was homosexual, and that the language demands this meaning, but that it was only one out of many sexual and other crimes of which the men of Sodom were guilty.

The closing chapter gives much food for thought, and shows how extremely difficult it is to legislate, or even to think, fairly about homosexuality, in the light of our attitude to the whole field of sexual conduct. Why do we treat men differently from women in this matter? Why is the homosexual branded as more reprehensible than the adulterer? Dr. Bailey suggests some interesting reasons.

J. STAFFORD WRIGHT.

THE JUNG CODEX.

By F. L. Cross (Ed.). Mowbrays. pp. 135. 15/-.

At last some Gnostic works of the Second Century A.D. have come to light, and research into Gnostic teaching will cease to be dependent on the witness of their opponents. In 1945 codices containing forty-eight Gnostic works were discovered at Nag Hammadi in Upper Egypt. Twelve codices remain for the present inaccessible in the Coptic Museum at Cairo. The thirteenth was bought by the Jung Institute, and made public at Zurich in 1953. It contains "A Letter of James", "The Letter to Rheginos," "A Treatise on the Three Natures," the "Prayer of the Apostles", and "The Gospel of Truth". The latter work was known by title at least to Irenæus, and

in its original form is thought to be composed by Valentinus c.140 A.D.

Dr. F. L. Cross has translated and edited two lectures on the Codex, delivered at Zurich by Professors H. C. Puech and G. Quispel, and a paper published by Prof. W. C. Van Unnik. Prof. Puech believes that most of the forty-eight works, although written in Coptic in the third and fourth centuries, are translations of Greek originals, and he dates the five works in the Jung Codex as early as 150 A.D. Apparently the Sethian Gnostics of Nag Hammadi accepted the Codex as a gift for their library, knowing that it comprised writings of Valentinian origin, which were at variance with their own beliefs.

For Prof. G. Quispel the significance of the Codex lies in its relation to the pre-Christian Jewish Gnosis of the Essenes, and the orthodox Gnosis later propounded by Origen. Certain Gnostic beliefs, such as the creation of the world by angels, or the endowment of man with a good and evil spirit, appear on reading the "Treatise of the Three Natures", to be derived from pre-Christian Jewish and Samaritan heterodoxy. Similar Jewish speculations on the Name of God (Jao) as an independent hypostasis are found in the Gospel of Truth, and suggest a new approach to the Logos doctrine. Incidentally there is no trace of Bultmann's pre-Christian Gnostic Redeemer in the Codex.

Prof. Van Unnik discusses the bearing of the new documents on the history of the Christian Canon: a study which has been practically at a standstill since the investigations of Zahn and Harnack. Detailed quotation shows that the author of the "Gospel of Truth", c.140 A.D., alludes to the majority of New Testament books (including controverted books such as Hebrews and Revelation (and also the Gospel of Peter!) as authoritative documents. Round about 140 A.D. a collection of writings virtually identical with our New Testament were accepted at Rome by Valentinus as Scripture; which implies that they had enjoyed authority for several years before his time.

This preview of the new discoveries makes us eager for the release and publication of the remaining codices deposited at Cairo. Works of such scholarly eminence make theological studies ever more exhilarating.

D. H. TONGUE.

THE MEANING OF THE CREATIVE ACT.

By Nicolas Berdyaev. Gollancz. pp. 344. 18/-.

This is one of Berdyaev's earlier works, being completed in 1914. He always refused to permit a reissue in Russian, saying that he wished to revise it before it was republished. He did, however, make one revision for the German translation, published in 1927. Use of this revision has been made in the production of this English translation of the work.

The overruling categories of the work are freedom and creativity. There is a treatment of such great themes as science, sex, family, art, ethics and sociology. In all of them there is seen to be an element of necessity and submissiveness, which is a result of the fall, a result of our living in the eras of law and redemption. These restrictions can only be overcome in a forthcoming religious epoch of creativeness. "Two moral ways have been opened before us: obedience and creativeness, the ordering of the world and soaring beyond it" (p. 272).

The book attempts to express the nature of this soaring beyond the world, to which man is called. It is a brave and stimulating attempt, though many readers may be tempted to agree with a sentence occurring on the very last page of the book—"What creativeness is, is inexplicable".

Berdyaev himself declared that the basic ideas of all his later writings are contained at least in germ in this one book. This may well be true, but the full flower of the later writings shows real growth both in depth and in balance. This book will therefore be of primary value for those who are concerned to trace the development of Berdyaev's thought; for those whose interest is of a less specialist kind, but who are anxious to benefit from the stimulus of his thought (and though the path is not easy, the benefit is great), the later writings are to be preferred.

It is a pity that the translator has inflicted quite so many -isms upon us—catastrophism, decadentism, gourmandism, academicism, parnasism, Appolonism, aristocratism, Dionysism, hierarchism, sociologism, economicism, psychologism, anthropologism, Tolstoyanism, Germanism, Yogism, are a small collection of not very elegant specimens.

MAURICE WILES.

METHODISM AND THE STRUGGLE OF THE WORKING CLASSES. 1850-1900

By Robert F. Wearmouth. *Edgar Backus.* pp. 269. 21/-.

This is a very dull book, useful no doubt to the expert, but dry ground to the more general reader interested in nineteenth century religious and social history. I must confess to a dislike of describing any book as dull (I have a sneaking suspicion that the fault may lie in me), nevertheless my attempts to lever up enthusiasm for Mr. Wearmouth's work have not borne much fruit.

In the first place this mausoleum of factual knowledge is never content with two or three examples to illustrate a point. When half a dozen lines would satiate the reader, he is treated to half a dozen pages (p. 25, et. seq.). Moreover repetition is provided if the illustration is colourful (p. 12 and 145). This, together with the introduction of terms and subjects, i.e. Labour Church, New Connection, Six Acts, Forward Movements, etc., without any attempt to explain what they are, proves both puzzling and irritating. One longs, in the early chapters, for some biographical taste to lend savour to the meat of the subject; in the latter chapter one's prayer is answered a hundred fold in page after page of thumbnail sketches, tedious to a degree. To the Anglican, the interest afforded by the mention of his Communion is dulled by the steady glare of disapproval emitted by the author.

Mr. Wearmouth opens his book with a long and factual picture of the dreadful social conditions of the nineteenth century, and follows it by two chapters on the attempts by the working classes to secure combination and political rights. Then comes a section discussing the advance of Methodism and the factors concerned in its progress. The two sections are married in the last; a third section which deals with the impact of Methodism on the social services, the trade unions and politics of the day.

As the last page is turned, one is left wondering just what impact

Methodism had on the nineteenth century life, but a close study of the excellent table of "contents" reveals that Mr. Wearmouth has been able to show that it did indeed help to provide both the leadership and the tone of the movement. One wishes that the same influence was at work in T.U. circles to-day. I think Mr. Wearmouth might well have added a chapter to his book by way of conclusion in which he drew together and discussed some of the points raised by the erudition of the earlier chapters. In it he might well have referred to the work of the nonconformist educationalists in the rise of the working class (an omission); and more particularly given to us an examination of the influence of Methodism on the developing philosophy of the Labour movement (a serious omission). The book, in fact, concludes with a very excellent bibliography and an inadequate index.

J. G. HUNTER.

THE IMAGERY OF BRITISH CHURCHES.

By M. D. Anderson. John Murray. pp. 223. 25/-.

Miss M. D. Anderson provides a veritable mine of information on a subject which, so far as one can ascertain, has never before been treated so comprehensively, so thoroughly, so lovingly, and yet so concisely, within the limits of a single volume of modest and handy dimensions. Even now the incomparable heritage which we in England possess in our medieval churches is by no means fully appreciated and it is often discouraging to note the attitude of indifference towards the wonders of art and craftsmanship which these buildings enshrine, not only on the part of the laity, but occasionally also, which is the more surprising, on the part of some of the clergy. Such lack of appreciation may be due partly to ignorance and partly to prejudice. There is undoubtedly much ignorance about the part which iconography played in the ministry of the Church in medieval days. There is perhaps even greater ignorance about the significance, subjective, doctrinal, and artistic, of such of this iconography as has been spared by the ravages of time and the hand of the iconoclast. There is inclined to be a natural prejudice against imagery of all kinds amongst members of the reformed Churches, although the passage of time and the deeper scholarship and artistic appreciation of our own day have to some extent abated the fierce antagonism which pre-reformation symbols and emblems were at one time wont to arouse in the heart and mind of every good Protestant.

With immense erudition and a formidable list of references to authorities and source-books, Miss Anderson tackles her subject from many angles. She endeavours, with ingenuity, understanding and sympathy, to reconstruct for us the angles of approach which would be characteristic of the parson, the craftsman, and the parishioner. She deals most comprehensively with such aspects of the subject as the structural setting of imagery, the significance of position, the choice of subjects, and some general conventions which governed the manner in which the sacred subjects were presented. Then follow a great wealth of examples arranged under general headings such as Old Testament subjects, Scenes from Our Lord's earthly life and ministry,

Heaven and Hell, the Saints of the Church, and so forth. Miss Anderson's deep scholarship should stimulate the artistic appreciation of medieval church imagery, whether it be stained glass, mural painting, carved stone or wood, or metal work, while her sympathetic and reverent handling of the subject should do much to remove any prejudice which may still exist.

The only criticism which one would venture about this altogether delightful book is the comparative paucity of illustrations. The few there are, are indeed excellent, but this small number merely whets the appetite for more.

It is worthy of mention that Miss Anderson is presenting the royalties on this book to the Historic Churches Preservation Trust.

J. H. HUMPHRIES.

THE RELIGIOUS QUEST.

By Joyce Kenwick. National Society & S.P.C.K. 15/6.

Dr. Kenwick writes as a Christian, as a psychologist, and as an educationist. Her aim has been to investigate the roots of religious belief and disbelief, not in order to establish a definite hypothesis, but to provide general data of practical value to those concerned with religious education. The data have been collected by the author from answers given to a questionnaire submitted to 338 people, including Christians (Anglican, Orthodox, Free Church, Roman Catholic), Jews and Moslems. The aim of the inquiry, says Dr. Kenwick, has been to discover (1) The roots of attraction (or antipathy) to religion . . . from the conscious memories of an individual's education, (2) The adequacy of the teaching received to form a clear and consistent idea of the essential doctrines and practices of his religion, (3) The adequacy of the teaching to resolve the conflicts set up by the advance of modern scientific knowledge with a theistic conception of the universe, and (4) The effect of religious education in raising or surmounting the barriers of race and nationality and sect.

A book like this can easily become tedious. The case-histories form its foundation material, but organization and comment are essential if the book is to avoid shapelessness. Dr. Kenwick groups her material under chapter-headings, and makes comments which are often penetrating and wise. We do not expect to find theological originality, and the aim of the book is to inform and instruct rather than to inspire; it is a solid, competent piece of work, which avoids both diffuseness and dogmatism. As Professor Reid remarks in his Foreword: "What the reader, and particularly the teacher of religion, will get from the book is a new awareness of the many, many factors which may be influencing the pupils he is trying to teach, an awareness which will help him to diagnose their states of mind and so approach them with greater understanding and sense of their difficulties".

The last chapter, "Some Practical Problems and Suggestions," is perhaps the most valuable, and one could wish that the author had given us more of such helpful pages. Here the collected material is used to indicate important factors in religious teaching method. The parson who feels entirely satisfied with his teaching of Confirmation candidates and others is a rare but almost certainly a foolish bird, and

most of us will be grateful for Dr. Kenwick's well-documented help. The most comprehensive and profound theology is useless if its possessor is incapable of starting where his pupils are and is ignorant of educational technique and method. Dr. Kenwick's book does not supply the content of our religious teaching, but it does help us to find our starting-point and to approach an effective method. We may hope that her final chapter may be expanded in another book, with plenty of actual examples of the suggestions given here. The present writer would lay out his money for it gladly.

DAVID ANDERSON.

SCRIPTURE IN CLASS.

By Michael Sims-Williams. Religious Education Press. pp. 104 7/6.

This is a book by a practising teacher and it is full of useful ideas about making Scripture a live subject. The book sets out a course of instruction covering, in a general way, the whole Bible, and it suggests methods of "getting across" the teaching which are within the scope of the ordinary teacher and practicable in class. To the one who may be foundering in a morass of theoretical literature this slim volume of a hundred pages comes as a breath of fresh air.

There are five sections. The first is an introductory lesson on "What do we mean by God?" It is simple and yet sets out to answer the deep questions in a child's mind. The illustrations are helpful and the method excellent even for those well beyond the Modern Secondary stage. Then follows a section called "The Unfolding Knowledge of God". Here Mr. Sims-Williams has accepted rather naïvely the critical position of twenty years ago: "Mr. P's idea of the world" is the kind of dogmatic phrase which seems inexcusable. This section has some good things but it is haunted by some ancient ghosts which raise more literary problems than they solve.

The third section has the title "The People of the Covenant" and deals with Hebrew history. There are some useful references and a fine sense of continuity, but any approach which emphasizes man's quest for God rather than God's self revelation to man leads to an inadequate picture of the character of God. A section on the prophets follows and this is called "The Prophets of Jahveh". It opens with a short and useful discussion on the meaning of prophecy, set out so that a class would at once be fascinated and see the point intended.

The last section on "The Light of the World" is in some ways the least satisfactory. There are some valuable references on the Messiah and the double strand of prophecy concerning King and Servant is rightly stressed, but the doctrine of Atonement is emaciated and one has the impression that the writer is least happy when dealing with this topic. The essence of Christianity is not made clear and the theology of conversion is entirely absent. Nevertheless, even in this New Testament part of his book Mr. Sims Williams has some valuable tips for those whose own ideas on the Bible are clear and uncompromising. Having made this caveat it remains that here is a practical, stimulating book, relatively cheap and well produced, from which all teachers of Scripture could learn something.

DUDLEY CLARKE.

JOHN SUNG—FLAME FOR GOD IN THE FAR EAST.

By Leslie T. Lyall. China Inland Mission. pp. 204. 8/6.

The weaknesses of some of those whom God has highly honoured in the service of the Gospel are often so great that we are tempted to ask, "How *could* God have used so-and-so?" The fact is HE did—and so we must look again at the servant of God to discover not only his failings but how it was that the power of God had free play in his life.

According to the judgment of a famous Christian fellow-countryman of John Sung, who took a dim view of irritable or bad-tempered missionaries, the subject of this biography would probably have been disqualified for great service. Hot tempered, impatient and brusque to the point of rudeness in his social contacts, John Sung has yet been rivalled by few in devotion to a single aim or in ruthlessness in casting aside all that he felt would hinder him burning out for God. How many have ever, for instance, deliberately destroyed all trace of their great academic success, lest it should tempt them to pursue worldly honour and forsake the will of God? (See p. 40.)

This book, to the present reviewer, is as challenging as a study in Christian character as it is life-giving as a proof of the power of "the gospel of God". Although quaint and even far-fetched in some of his exegesis of Scripture Dr. Sung was nevertheless amazingly balanced in his grasp of Bible truth, and was never led astray into excesses of doctrine or practice. This was because "John . . . was full of the Bible . . . His mind was completely saturated with the Word of God. Thus also he was able to infect others with his own deep love for the Book." To this day his system of Bible study is being widely used in the Far East.

Of late God has given to the needy world of to-day another evangelist whose work is being strikingly owned by HIM. To the widespread "Why?" of many the answer can, to a large extent, be found in John Sung's life-story. The two men have much in common, though personally different in many respects. This is a book that every Christian, and in particular every minister, should read on the knees of his heart. God has not ceased to choose men to do His will for and in a sinful world; His hard task is perhaps to find those willing to be chosen.

T. E. BENSON.

FURTHER REVIEWS

CHRIST AND THE CÆSARS.

By Ethelbert Stauffer. S.C.M. Press. pp. 293. 18/-.

Preachers and teachers in the Church have been long aware of the useful contribution the archæologist makes to deeper understanding and more accurate interpretation of the Scriptures and early Church history. They are less familiar, perhaps, with the contribution of the numismatist. Yet the expert study of ancient coins has just as distinct and almost as valuable evidence to offer the Bible expositor and Church

historian. A good beginning for each might be this book by Ethelbert Stauffer, numismatist and professor for New Testament Studies at the University of Erlangen in Germany.

These historical sketches, personalizing the dramatic struggle between the rule of the Cæsars and the rule of Christ cover the period 133 B.C. to A.D. 313. Here is concentrated, in sharpest delineation, the essence of this war of Christ against antichrist which was emperor-worship. It was an absolute conflict, allowing no compromise and no toleration, for it involved that primary commandment, "I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt have no other gods before me".

The context of this spiritual warfare is carefully detailed by Stauffer, largely from evidence provided by ancient coins. By his newly minted coins (the "newspaper and radio" of the day) each successive emperor proclaimed himself the expected Saviour of mankind and was received (temporarily) as such. Each new reign was heralded as the advent of a new age, but our author shows the equally monotonous regularity with which these false hopes were dashed. Yet he affirms rightly "one of the earliest longings of mankind is the longing for God to appear on earth" (p. 36). Christ, not the Cæsars, met this longing. Archbishop Temple pointed to the supreme irony of history that when the Lord of Glory was born on earth hardly anyone knew it was happening.

It is interesting, even provoking, to note Stauffer's identification of John who wrote "The Revelation" with John the son of Zebedee. For those still hesitant as to the identity of the Beast concealed by the cipher "666" (Rev. xiii. 8) which it is said "has for 1,800 years caused so much fruitless racking of brains", a reasoned, but not too common, answer is provided.

But these are incidental points. The majestic theme of this book is the triumph of Christ and His Church over Antichrist and his persecuting underlings. God ultimately vindicates the right—and His vindication includes full retribution upon those who have rendered unto Cæsar the things that are God's. This theme is worthy of study to-day by those alive to the situation of the Church in any modern state, where a comfortable conformity to the official, political doctrine or "party line" may compromise one's allegiance to Christ and therefore must be resisted at all cost.

The translation, which happily preserves the book's several touches of humour, is by K. and R. Gregor Smith. FRANK CARLESS.

ESTHER, SONG OF SONGS AND LAMENTATIONS.

By G. A. F. Knight. S.C.M. Press. pp. 140. 7/6.

Mr. Knight was for many years a Church of Scotland missionary to the Jews and now occupies the chair of Old Testament studies at Knox College, Dunedin, New Zealand. He has already contributed to the S.C.M.'s "Torch Series" of Bible Commentaries an exegesis of the Book of Ruth and also of the prophecy of Jonah: in this new volume he deals with three more of the Festival Rolls. All who wish to make an intelligent study of Esther, the Song of Songs and Lamentations will find here a great deal of practical help and information. One cannot

help feeling that these three small Old Testament books deserve to be better known, for each has a real contribution to make to our understanding of God's revelation of Himself in the experience of the Chosen People and in the Scriptural record of that experience.

Esther is described as a complete little historical novel, something after the style of Lloyd Douglas's *The Robe* or Scholem Asch's *The Nazarene*, in which the author seeks to assure himself and his readers of God's overruling providence in world affairs. Some of us may not be too happy about this idea of "reverent fiction" (after all, neither *The Robe* nor *The Nazarene* is regarded by anybody as part of the Bible), and the arguments advanced on its behalf are not altogether convincing. The secular historian and the man who seeks to interpret God's dealings with mankind will not necessarily select the same events and personages for their own particular purpose. Nor need a person or event be assumed to be fictional because unmentioned outside of the Bible. Belshazzar, I believe, was once put into that category and had to be yanked out again! But this does not detract from the general helpfulness of Mr. Knight's exegesis.

The Song of Songs is not a narrative poem but "a necklace of independent pearls, whose string is the theme of human love". Our author's treatment here is frankly typological, and that may cause offence to some (as it already has done to the reviewer in the *Expository Times*). But it is difficult to see how otherwise the presence of these love lyrics in the Christian Bible can be justified. Mr. Knight believes that the Christian man who reads the Song will discover that "the whole realm of physical love has been exalted and sanctified by Christ, Who has lifted it from the mire and filth to which unregenerate minds consign it, and has raised it up to the very gates of heaven itself".

Lamentations consists of five distinct poems of which the second and fourth are akin. Though not from the pen of Jeremiah they are indebted to him for some of the ideas expressed. They also reflect ideas in Ezekiel and Deutero-Isaiah and are a poignant representation of Israel's sorrow at the destruction of Jerusalem and of the life of the nation. Here, says Mr. Knight, we see Israel's crucifixion and Israel's "Easter Saturday". Incidentally, should not this be "Easter Eve"? Easter Saturday is the Saturday *after* Easter, not the one before it, which is Holy Saturday in the Christian Calendar. Perhaps our Presbyterian friend has allowed his mind to become confused by holiday timetables and railway posters! But his delineation of his chosen theme shows clear insight and penetration. L. E. H. STEPHENS-HODGE.

BRITISH LATIN SELECTIONS, A.D. 500-1400.

By R. A. Browne. Blackwell. pp. 61 + 144. 32/-.

LATIN IN CHURCH, THE HISTORY OF ITS PRONUNCIATION.

By F. Brittain. New edition. Mowbray. For the Alcuin Club. pp. 98. 8/-.

The preface of the Ordinal requires that those who are to be admitted Deacon should be learned in the Latin tongue. This requirement is clearly by now a dead letter. A knowledge of Latin is no longer the one essential mark of the educated man. Yet the decline in this

knowledge among the clergy, so that few are now able to read with any ease in that language, has surely gone too far. Much of the theological and historical treasury not only of the Universal Church but also of the English Church in particular has Latin as its key, and a surprisingly large amount has never been and is not likely to be published in translation. Any attempt therefore to keep alive interest in Latin studies is to be warmly welcomed.

Nothing could be better designed to stimulate such an interest than Dr. Browne's book, especially among those who have acquired some knowledge of classical authors at school or college, but have not any real acquaintance with those Christian writers who are the special concern of the theologian. In his introduction Dr. Browne traces the development of Christian Latin out of Classical Latin, and gives an account of some of its characteristic constructions, styles and rhythms. There follows a fascinating selection of annotated passages from British writers of the period A.D. 500-1400. Theological interest was not a primary principle of selection, but there is before the reader a wide variety of pieces which cannot fail to hold the attention of the theologian and church historian. The early histories and chronicles, poetry, letters, lives of the saints, philosophy and doctrine, all have their place. If some evangelical scholars have tended to dismiss too easily the medieval and pre-Reformation writers as of little concern to them, they have neglected a great heritage. Some of the stories of monastic saints, even if they seem altogether remote from present conditions, have their distinctive charm, and time and again in this book are met passages which give real delight, e.g. a letter of Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln, written about A.D. 1240 to the authorities at Oxford, of which the theme is: "Holy Scripture the Basis of all Sound Theological Teaching". Dr. Browne's book concludes with a vocabulary of medieval words and meanings.

Mr. Brittain's book is a slighter work, but will be valued by all who have to give guidance about the pronunciation of Latin in public, e.g. in the singing of carols and anthems of which the original words are preserved. The fallacy is attacked that there was once a more or less uniform pronunciation of Latin in the Western Church, which the Reformation dissolved. Latin, even in the days of the undivided Church, was pronounced with wide divergences from country to country, each adapting it to the sounds of the indigenous language. It is a mistake, therefore, to introduce in England the modern Italian ecclesiastical use (e.g. initial "c" said as "ch", which leads Mr. Brittain to describe it as the "Chees and Chaws" pronunciation). It never had any adherents in this country until very recently, when it was brought in by those who mistakenly supposed it to represent a "church Latin". Our author advocates an anglicized pronunciation but with a retention of the English vowel sounds used in Reformation times rather than those now common. The result will be:

All consonants as in current English.

All vowels as in current English, except the following:

a as in father; ē, ae, oe as in prey; î as in machine; ū as in bull.

Such a method would preserve the best English tradition in the matter.

A. G. WIDDESS.

CONSCIENCE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

By C. A. Pierce. S.C.M. Press. pp. 151. 8/6 (Paper).

Scrutinize the great Biblical words, said Sir E. Hoskyns, and discover what the early Christians had in their heads when they used them. This method has been very skilfully applied to "Conscience" by C. A. Pierce, with searching consequences.

Rejecting the loose assertion of many commentators that *συνείδησις* is Stoic in origin, he sets it where it belongs in a group of cognate words and phrases whose meaning remains fairly constant in popular Greek writing, from sixth century B.C. to seventh century A.D. A fifteen page analytical index of the Greek sources is appended. *συνείδησις* is shown to be an element of human nature which God in ordering the universe has implanted in man, to exercise guardianship over him. It judges man for specific wrong acts committed in the past by himself, inflicting pain like an ulcer. Since Old Testament references to this guilty conscience are very rare, and confined to Wisdom literature, we must recognize that in using *συνείδησις* the New Testament baptized a Greek concept.

A rather disgusted St. Paul is first confronted with the Greek "conscience" at Corinth, where his Gentile converts take it for granted. "This conscience of yours, which you keep throwing in my face when we discuss idol meats," he exclaims, "how exactly are we going to protect the weak brother from the pain it inflicts? He perishes from the disease of a conscience which argument cannot quieten." Recovering from the shock of a new idea, he endeavours reluctantly to find a place for *συνείδησις* in the comprehensive scheme of Romans. It appears in Rom. xiii. 5 alongside the external manifestation of God's wrath inflicted by the executioner, as the internal counterpart of that wrath within the man himself; an inner compulsion limiting the rebel's wrongdoing. Only in 2 Cor. i. 12 does he accord positive value to conscience, as testifying to Apostolic sincerity, and even so such testimony is fallible and cannot justify (1 Cor. iv. 4).

It remains to contrast the apostate's scarred conscience in 1 Tim. iv. 2 with the believer's pure one in 1 Tim. iii. 9 and to examine Hebrews, where Christ's sacrifice is spoken of as cleansing the conscience, securing access to God in worship, and thereby changing the very nature of *συνείδησις* from pain to joy.

Now we have altered and abused the term! Conscience is taken to-day as justifying in advance actions of others besides one's self; in the New Testament it cannot justify; it refers only to the past, and to the acts of one's self alone. The confusion began when *συνείδησις* was translated by the Latin "conscientia", which really means common sense applied to moral questions. This has culminated in modern man's idolatry of private choice; so that provided he follows his "conscience", as he calls it, he feels justified in pursuing any mode of conduct which happens to appeal to him. At least the writer has given the Church the means whereby to salvage *συνείδησις* before the idolatry of "conscience" destroys the Church.

D. A. TONGUE.

THE HOPE OF THE GOSPEL.

By J. S. Thomson. S.C.M. Press. pp. 188. 10/6.

Hope has been something of a Cinderella among the three graces. Love, or charity, has always occupied the great place which it deserves. Indeed, it has even been made the basis of perverted schemes of self-righteousness. Justice was done to faith in the great age of the Reformation, and its nature and function has always been grasped where the Evangelical tradition has been maintained. But hope has only too often been scorned, neglected or misunderstood.

Yet there are signs of a change, for not only did Evanston focus the attention of the churches and theology on this theme, but some important studies of Christian hope have begun to appear. It is amongst these that we may number the Alexander Robertson lectures by the Dean of the Faculty of Surriif at McGill University, Montreal, which have recently appeared in book form. The timeliness of the discussion adds at once to its interest and importance. The plan of Dr. Thomson is a very simple one. He begins with hope in general as a phenomenon of human life and experience. He then considers successively the meaning and place of hope in the Old Testament, the preaching of Jesus, and the apostolic kerygma. He concludes by relating the Gospel to the contemporary world, and by a final discussion of Christian hope.

We may say at once that the book gives ample demonstration of the talents of the author. It is extremely well written: a fine model not merely for students but for many professors as well. It is enriched by several apt quotations. Varied sources are drawn upon, but with a discrimination which goes beyond mere eclecticism. The discussion is always informed and helpful, and many true and shrewd observations are made.

Yet for all these qualities the book is vitiated from the outset by the inversion which is a sure mark of every form and variety of a natural and not in the strict sense a biblical theology. If we are really thinking of Christian hope we cannot make it a particular example—not even the consummation—of a thing called hope in general. We must begin at once with the Gospel hope. We must learn what the only true and meaningful hope is from the Bible and the faith itself. We must relate it strictly to Jesus Christ, and to His atonement, and especially to the fulfilment of the atonement in His parousia, the resurrection of the dead and glorification in the new creation. If we consider hope in general, as of course we must, it must be seen and known only in the light of the hope which is man's response, with faith and love, to the salvation in Jesus Christ which is past and present and future.

It is true, of course, that in his biblical analysis, and indeed in the wider discussion, the author has a feeling after these great truths. This is only to be expected. But even where truths are stated, they are never quite in focus. A half obscurity rests upon them which is the inevitable consequence of the false method and its presupposition. For all its force and scholarship, it cannot therefore advance a true understanding of Christian or Gospel hope.

F. J. TAYLOR.

SHORT REVIEWS

OBEYING GOD'S WORD.

By Alan Stibbs. *Inter-Varsity Fellowship*. pp. 79. 2/6 (paper).

Here is a really excellent book. Within the compass of only eighty pages there is presented in terms, as clear as they are both convincing and engaging what the writer rightly claims to be the secret of knowing and enjoying the very life of God.

Just as the Fall, he maintains, was due to an unwillingness on Man's part to fit in to the set-up which God has provided and ordained, so conversely spiritual recovery and health, leading ultimately to the full knowledge and enjoyment of God, can only be by a willingness to enter into a life of obedience to God's revealed will. "Man cannot live by bread alone"—not merely shall *not*—"but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" is his main theme. This fundamental principle is dealt with, and fully illustrated, in a way which shows how wonderfully the principles of the Scriptures, when rightly understood, can meet man's requirements through life in all its variety and vicissitudes. Mr. Stibbs rightly insists upon the fact that fruitfulness and victory on the one hand and failure and sin on the other, directly reflect the character of the believer's response to the creative and controlling word of God as revealed in the Bible. Perhaps the greatest asset of this valuable and virile little book is the inspiration it gives to study the Bible itself, with a spiritual purpose not to be lost either in the consideration of critical criteria, or in preparation for addresses!

C.C.K.

I TURNED MY COLLAR ROUND.

By James Insight. *Herbert Jenkins*. pp. 192. 10/6.

It is hard to determine the chief motives which led to the writing of this book which purports to describe the first year in the life of a clergyman. The method is autobiographical and the reader is asked to give credence to a strange series of experiences. James Insight arrived in his curacy without ever having met his vicar, he went to his ordination apparently in tweed coat and flannel trousers, his first sermon was provided by Sermonsenders Ltd. and was preached in the same church by another clergyman the same evening, he had the company of a drunk woman on his first Mothers' Union outing, he had no idea what to do at a cremation, the verger of the church was steadily filling the crypt with boiler ash and the vicar was either unaware of this or unconcerned, he stole an apple from his bishop's garden and did not recognize the bishop dressed as a gardener, and of course he was never quite certain whether he was in love with the vicar's daughter or his landlady's daughter.

There are very few normal characters in the book and there are plenty of the caricatures that one would expect, but there are also moving passages which show a real concern for people and an awareness of the mysteries of God's dealings with them. There is no indication of the way in which the worst *corpus mixtum* of a congregation can be, however incompletely, part of the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, but there are occasional indications of a deep understanding of the

opportunities and responsibilities of pastoral work.

During his diaconate Insight was converted through the work of an American evangelist. We are told that this made a difference to his work ; it might also have been expected to produce a different writing of some of the earlier parts of the book.

Perhaps layfolk will find, as the blurb says, that at the end of the book " there lingers a sense of sympathy and respect for the men who have turned their collars round ". We hope they will not imagine that they have been told the whole truth. It is ordinands who will stand to gain most from being shown that parish life is not one long C.S.S.M., University Mission, evangelistic camp or S.C.M. discussion group.

C.W.J.B.

COLD WAR IN HELL.

By Harry Blamires. Longmans. pp. 198. 10/6.

This is in some ways too clever a book ; it shares with the uncomprehending reader a world of private allegory and allusion, illuminated from time to time by clues to its significance, but leaving me in considerable doubt whether, at many points, the author knows what he is talking about. Satires and allegories are delightful things when they are properly used—when they convey a meaning that could not otherwise be told so vigorously or told at all ; but I closed this book without feeling that I had been told anything, or even very adequately entertained. This may be my fault—reception requires a receiver as well as a transmitter ; if it is so I can only be thankful that from Bunyan in 1677 to Big Brother in 1984 there have been satires and allegories which those with simple tastes can read with profit and enjoyment.

T.D.S.

THE CHRISTIAN DUTY OF HAPPINESS.

By C. A. Alington. Faber & Faber. pp. 88. 7/6.

This brightly written little book provokes thought and even antagonism. The author says in his introduction, " three members of my family, all of them better Christians than myself, and one at least as good a judge of the English language, have been unceasing in their protests ". Dr. Griffith Thomas used to say, " Happiness depends on what happens ", and if this is so the Christian cannot always be happy. Dr. Alington himself sees the difficulty and asks for a better word. He rejects " joy " as being too ecstatic and cheerfulness as too slight, but his choice of " happiness " does not seem to express adequately the mood he describes as a Christian duty. This mood, by whatever name we call it, is indeed inevitable if one really believes that " all things work together for good to them that love God " when we are thinking of our own trials. It is difficult nevertheless for a sensitive man daily in touch with the sorrow, the pain, the inhumanity of a world constituted like ours, to be consistently happy. If, as Dr. Alington seems to mean, the Christian does not possess a deep undercurrent of peaceful confidence which enables him to enter into St. Paul's mood of " sorrowful yet always rejoicing " there is something lacking in his relationship with God. The author points the way to this relationship.

Quotations are apparently made from memory and are occasionally

inaccurate, as in those from Francis Thompson and F. W. H. Myers ; but this is a very small blemish on a delightful book. W.N.C.

THE FELLOWSHIP.

By Guy H. King. Marshall, Morgan & Scott. pp. 127. 7/6.

This is a short devotional and expositional study of the first epistle of St. John. The author has taken the idea of fellowship (fellowship with God and with one another) as being the central theme of this epistle, and the keynote to the understanding of it. Each of the fourteen chapters of the book deals with a different facet of this central theme. At the same time we are led verse by verse through the epistle ; as each chapter is prefaced by a few verses which are then expounded and commented on. The Life of the Fellowship, the Light of the Fellowship and the Love of the Fellowship would form very wonderful and fascinating subject matter for any book. Here, however, is a combination of engrossing themes put across in a very readable way.

Full use is made of parables and word pictures. Chosen at random is the story of the small boy, who, when explaining to his mother why he had fallen out of bed, exclaims : " I suppose I must have fallen asleep too near where I got in ", and the point is driven home, that many Christian lives founder for the very same reason. J.C.C.R.

MAN, MORALS AND SOCIETY.

By J. C. Flugel. Penguin Books. pp. 415. 3/6.

This book was first published in 1945 and has now been issued in the Pelican series. The main body of the book is an account of modern psycho-analytical knowledge, with special emphasis on those elements of psychology which have a close bearing on ethics. As a general survey of psycho-analytical teaching it is most valuable. It is well written, with a judicious balance of theory and example.

The later chapters, which deal more explicitly with ethics, sociology and religion, are far less satisfactory. The only type of ethical theory taken into account is an evolutionary ethic. The religious emotions, we are told, need to be secularized, and the religion of the future must be a religion of humanity. It is unfortunate when such views are presented as if they were the conclusions of psychological study, when they are in fact simply the unsubstantiated opinions of one, who is clearly a most gifted psycho-analytic writer, but equally clearly an extremely naive philosopher. M.F.W.

THE POCKET COMMENTARY OF THE BIBLE : PART ONE : GENESIS I-IX.

By B. F. C. Atkinson. H. E. Walter, Ltd. pp. 100. 2/- (paper).

Those who know Dr. Basil Atkinson's love for the Lord and his lifelong devotion to the study of His Word will be pleased to know that his readiness to share with others his own insight into the treasures of Bible truth is now finding wider outlet in the publication of a detailed commentary on the text of Scripture. Also its publication in small pocket volumes will enable many to sample it, to carry it with them, to spend spare moments reading it, and to introduce others to its actual use and enjoyment in a way that would not be possible with a big expensive volume. A.M.S.

NOTES ON BOOKS RECEIVED

The New Testament R.S.V. (Illustrated) (*Nelson*, 12/6). This fine edition of R.S.V. is most suitable for presentation. Bound in rexine, with a slip case, it is illustrated by eight reproductions of old masters. This edition should certainly help to extend the R.S.V.'s influence.

Every Man's Own Lawyer by "A Barrister", 68th edition (*Technical Press*, 30/-). This valuable compendium, brought up to date, enlarged and revised, must prove a boon to incumbents especially. Questions which touch on the law are sometimes brought by parishioners and this book will generally give the required answer. Most points concerning the rights and wrongs of individuals are dealt with in non-technical language, the statutes and measures regarding them being analyzed sensibly and briefly. The sections on husband and wife and children, and such matters as Rent Restriction and Education, may be particularly useful. The section on the Church of England merely summarizes the Act of 1919, and might well be extended in a further edition to cover such conondrums as the legal responsibility of incumbents and councillors for loans or expenses incurred by a Parochial Church Council. The thousand pages of this book are well worth the price.

The True Glory, edited by Eric Fenn (*British and Foreign Bible Society*, 1/-). This is the Bible Society's popular report for 1954, the year of the Third Jubilee. Once again it has been tastefully produced, with photographs and matter which should give it a wide interest. Over a million complete Bibles, half a million New Testaments and more than a million gospels were published in London alone by the Society during 1954, and 1,090 tons of books in some 300 languages sent to all parts of the world. It can well be imagined that the Report provides a survey of much Christian advance throughout the world, for the Society's colporteurs go everywhere.

Light on the Way by H. M. Carson (*Inter-Varsity Fellowship*, 3d.) provides introductory notes for study of selected Bible passages. The suggestions for study and the notes themselves should prove most useful for young Christians with a reasonable standard of education, at universities or young people's fellowships, or the senior forms of schools.

No Easy Way by Patience Fetherston (*Highway Press*, 1/-) is a play about an *ashram* (small community of Christian life) in India, and is suitable for use by parishes anxious to use drama as a means to extend missionary interest. **The Palace of the King** by A. A. Barker (*Highway*, 1/-) is less effective, whether seen as drama or missionary publicity.

Outlaw by Kolya Vionov (*Harvill*, 16/-) is the autobiography of a Soviet waif. His parents were liquidated when he was small and he was thrown on the streets. It seems there is a large population of such waifs, their hand against every man. Vionov was a prisoner during the war and eventually eluded the N.K.V.D. and escaped to the U.S.A. Although less thoughtful or mature than Tokaev's *Betrayal of an Ideal* it provides a useful insight into the miseries of a dictator-state, as well as a rattling good tale for reading.

Services and Prayers for Country Use by P. A. Welsby (*Longmans*, 6/-). A country rector gives us the compilation he has made for his own use. It includes special services (Plough Sunday, Rogationtide, Harvest, etc.) and occasional prayers. Country clergy, though they may not have so many special services as Mr. Welsby, will welcome this book, especially the special prayers and the children's section.

The Mermaid Man by Hans Christian Andersen (*Arthur Barker*, 16/-) is a new abridged translation by Maurice Michael of Andersen's autobiography. Other than the intrinsic interest of this strange autobiography by a strange man, and the charm of his style and story, there is considerable light thrown on the somewhat decayed Protestantism of early nineteenth century Denmark. Andersen had faith, simple and rather self-centred. He knew Kierkegaard, and quarrelled with him, and he often visited England. The abridgement is well done, making a compact and sustained story.