

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

Book Reviews

THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS.

By E. W. Heaton. Pelican Books. 3/6.

Perhaps in no department of theological study is movement more apparent than in that of the Old Testament. If we read books published in the early twenties of this century, such as Dr. T. H. Robinson's *Prophecy and the Prophets in Ancient Israel*, and compare them with books published to-day, we are struck with the change in attitude towards the Bible. In the twenties, scholars had to give reasons why the Old Testament should still be read by the Church, because from the theories of the literary and "higher" critics, it would appear that the Bible was such a mosaic of literary snippets, and its writers so deficient in all historical (and even moral!) sense, that its retention was something for which the Church really had to apologize. Dr. Robinson, for instance, wrote: "Christianity . . . offers the highest idealism that the world has ever seen" (p. 3); "The ancient world saw no necessary connection between religion and morality" (p. 5); "In spite of all crudity in the early Hebrew theology, there was something in their knowledge and thought which could be modified, even transformed" (p. 36); and so forth.

If Dr. Robinson persuaded us to retain this strange old literature for the study of our religion because, judged as it then was by purely natural standards, it presented us with a high idealism, our present author helps us a good deal forward in having confidence that the Old Testament is really worth a high place in our esteem because of its own intrinsic worth. For instance, Canon Heaton expresses the following opinion on a well-worn topic: "Whatever the authenticity of the patriarchal narratives as history (and archæological discoveries have shown that at least they reflect with accuracy the general movements and conditions of the turbulent period they depict), it is evident that they have been geared to the normative Exodus tradition, and made to look forward to the deliverance from Egypt" (p. 59). There is, in other words, a higher regard to-day for the Bible as historically based—its idealism springs out of historical situations, at any rate of some kind, actually experienced.

Both authors study the prophetic messages in their historical context, and we have much more knowledge of this historical background than formerly. No Old Testament teacher dare omit the study of that background. Does the "supernatural" character of the writings still shine forth? The answer is surely "yes"—an affirmation more firmly expressed by Heaton than by Robinson. The conservative is thankful for this, and he can feel himself largely justified in having refused to be satisfied with the naturalistic, or evolutionary, theories which dominated the minds of the older scholars.

There is one matter, however, in which Canon Heaton's treatment still leaves one dissatisfied. This is in connection with "Messianic" prophecy. He writes: "For the prophets of Israel, it was the Kingdom which brought in the 'Messiah' and not the 'Messiah' the

Kingdom" (p. 163). One cannot help remembering the statement: "Beginning at Moses and all the prophets He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself." Has the Church (guided by our Lord?) been wrong all down the ages in believing the Old Testament is only intelligible as bearing witness to Christ, the Messiah? Surely, the *end* explains the *means*—Christ must be found in the Old Testament because it leads up to Him.

Canon Heaton gives us confidence in his knowledge of the contents of the books, and the quotations from the Revised Standard Version give a freshness to the passages. Also his obvious love of his subject make the book a delight to read. Much can be learnt from it, and theological students might well be told of it. W. C. G. PROCTOR.

IDEALS IN MEDICINE.

Tyndale Press. pp. 180. 12/6.

This is essentially a Christian approach to the problems of medicine and aims at the senior student and newly qualified doctor. The distinctive ethical code for the Christian doctor is love; to God first, and to his neighbour—here the patient and his relatives—second. Dedicated to the service of our patients, "we must be both good Christians and good doctors, kind and humble, and ever ready to go the second mile". Despite the changing face of medicine there remain many satisfactions for the family doctor, not least in the matter of relationships.

The control of life with its problems of contraception—rightly accepted—abortion, eugenics, and euthanasia—rightly rejected—is well stated: sexual problems, however, masturbation, perversions, homosexuality, are too shortly considered to be of much worth. Indeed, this is a general criticism that too often the problem is stated without there following adequate discussion. In the problems of psychological medicine, for instance, there is much of interest, even to the quoting from the Thirty-nine Articles, but there is no mention of leucotomy.

The doctor needs truth, love, realism, and wisdom as his guiding principles in dealing with the disabled, the incurable, and the dying: in new treatments, in all experimentation he must guard against abuse by remembering that man is a unique being in creation, and bears God's image.

Delinquency is primarily an environmental problem springing from defective family relationships; clubs, schools, good leadership, may all help, but the true solution is conversion. The need for sympathy, understanding, and gentleness to the parents of defective children is rightly stressed. Despite renewed interest in "Faith Healing" most Christian doctors remain sceptical, whilst of course gladly acknowledging that all healing ultimately is from God; co-operation between doctors and clergy is warmly advocated. Chapters on medical missions and ultimate loyalties close the book. Lord Lister's injunction, "The one rule of practice is to put yourself in the patient's place," makes a fitting conclusion. Because of diversity of authorship, the book is uneven in its value; there is a distinct tendency to preach, and though doctors need often to be recalled to high and Christian ideals I doubt

whether a book that purports to be on medical ethics is the right place for it. Having said this, there remains much that is good and deserving of a wide reading.

S. H. GOULD.

II CORINTHIANS. AN INTRODUCTION AND COMMENTARY

By Professor R. V. J. Tasker, M.A., B.D. Tyndale Press. 8/6.

Professor Tasker begins his Preface with an apt quotation from Ruskin: "Having faithfully listened to the great teachers that you may enter into their thoughts, you have got this higher advance to make; you have to enter into their hearts." This, he says, is the experience which readers of II Corinthians may enjoy, for in no other Epistle does St. Paul "so unsparingly . . . unbosom himself". But the commentary substantiates the truth of a further observation: "To enter into the heart of Paul is to know Jesus and the power of His resurrection." Yet we hasten to add that, like other volumes in the same series, this commentary is "primarily exegetical and only secondarily homiletic" or devotional. The text of the Epistle is subjected to careful, scholarly scrutiny in the light of the most recent knowledge. Professor Tasker quotes freely from Denney, Hodges, and a less familiar commentary by Allan Menzies (Macmillan, 1912). But with "p. 46" and Moulton and Milligan before him he is in a better position than any of them to throw light on the exact meaning of words and phrases whose sense has partially baffled the earlier commentators. Both on external and internal grounds Professor Tasker puts a convincing case for the unity of the Epistle, and for the view, already widely held, that the "painful" Letter referred to in chapter vii, verse 8, is not I Corinthians, but another Epistle which has not survived. It achieved its aim, and was perhaps destroyed. Not everyone, however, will follow him in abandoning the interpretation of the "thorn in the flesh" as a physical malady. He holds—with the Reformers and many of the early Fathers—that "the thorn was *spiritual* in character, sent by God 'for the flesh', i.e., to prick the bubble of the apostle's arrogance". But even on this highly debatable point no one could fail to respect the cogency of the Professor's reasoning.

FRANK HOUGHTON.

HUMAN NATURE AND CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE.

By William P. Wylie. S.C.M. Press. 128 pp. 8/6.

THE PATTERN OF LOVE.

By William P. Wylie. Longmans, Green & Co. pp. 212. 16/-.

When as Christians we talk or write about sex and marriage, we usually take pains to point out that sex is a positive good. But before we have gone very far, as likely as not we find ourselves regarding it with "a sort of fascinated horror". The words are those of Mr. Wylie, who has written these two mature books, which must rank among the best positive Christian work on the subject.

These books will stand reading together, and the one illumines the other. The first is rather more of a handbook, though certainly not

for students only. Starting with sex as a biological phenomenon, it shows how in man it is the vehicle for something deeper, yes, even for Christian *agape*. Tension comes when the Christian Church plays down romantic love, and others play down marriage, and Mr. Wylie's glorification of both in unison is a fine piece of writing. Infatuations, petting, the fading of the first glamour, family planning, "affairs" after marriage, are faced bluntly but well. The book is not concerned with sexual technicalities and aberrations.

In his other book Mr. Wylie becomes the poet. He gives us the Genesis picture of the two-made one, of the forming of the *two-self*, an expression which he has taken from Charles Williams, whose writings colour much of his thinking. He works out more fully the thought that through romantic love we are intended in marriage to come to the divine *agape*. Some theologians will quarrel with this, but to my mind his thoughts carry weight. Naturally he has something helpful to say also to those who do not marry.

There is rather more in this book of possible "affairs" after marriage. To some of us these may seem unlikely possibilities, but every one of us knows that they do happen. Why should a happily married person apparently fall in love again, and what should he or she do about it? Mr. Wylie develops Dr. Sherwin Bailey's idea of *accepted variants*, whom we might have married, but he shows how foolish it is to think that the new "love" constitutes a call to renounce the old.

Both books show a rare understanding of the "follies" of youth and of the situation of those who have remarried after divorce. Although Mr. Wylie himself takes the rigorist position over such marriages, he treats the facts as they stand with Christian commonsense. He does not offer a big stick to beat the young people of to-day and to trounce modern morals.

J. STAFFORD WRIGHT.

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND ESCHATOLOGY IN PAUL. (THEOLOGY OCCASIONAL PAPERS NO. 6)

By N. Q. Hamilton. Oliver Boyd Ltd. 1957. pp. 94. 8/6.

This is biblical theology at its very best. It begins with three chapters on the Pauline doctrine, emphasizing the indissoluble connection between the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ, the unavoidable future orientation of the present experience of the Spirit, and the resulting inevitable and necessary tension in Christian living between what is, or should be, ours now already, and what is not yet, but will one day be ours. After these opening chapters come three other chapters devoted to a clear statement and critical appraisal of the consistent eschatology of Dr. Schweitzer, the realized eschatology of Dr. Dodd, and the reinterpreted eschatology of Professor Bultmann. Finally, there is a concise summary of the far reaching practical implications of the Pauline doctrines, if they are accepted, and the ultimately disastrous consequences of their rejection.

If there is a defect in this profound little book, it is in its failure to treat at all of the relation of St. Paul's doctrine of the Spirit and the End to his doctrine of the Church, Ministry, and Sacraments. All that Mr. Hamilton says positively about the Holy Spirit and the believer

seems to me so clear, convincing and constructive that I wish he could have gone on to touch upon what would have been (for most of his readers) the points of present controversial significance and interest.

But it is very great gain to have the Pauline perspective stated so clearly and the challenges (for such they are) to that perspective by three great modern theologians, so clearly exposed. It falls outside Mr. Hamilton's scope to discuss fully how far the Pauline perspective and vocabulary need adjustment in the light of other biblical or modern ideas. I take it that he would make little or no concessions to modern thought, but an interesting aside on the possibility of a Platonic outlook on time in Hebrews and St. John (p. 70) suggests that there is need of caution lest in rejecting all notions of time, except the strictly linear conception of St. Paul and Professor Cullmann, we find that we have in fact failed not only to meet some of the most penetrating challenges of our own time, but also to grasp the full grandeur of the New Testament outlook in all its rich comprehensiveness and wide variety. Even St. Paul, though he may not have changed his views as much as Professor Dodd thinks, may have enlarged their scope and horizon more than Mr. Hamilton seems to imagine. He refutes Dodd by quoting Dodd on Romans. But it would have been more to the point to have examined in detail St. Paul in Ephesians.

But let not criticism, but profound appreciation for a fine piece of detailed biblical study and exegesis be the last word of this review! I sincerely hope every Evangelical will read this paper and look up all the biblical references.

J. E. FISON.

THE VIRGIN BIRTH OF CHRIST.

By J. Gresham Machen. James Clarke. pp. 415. 18/-.

Machen was a learned Presbyterian with the heart of a Crusader and the mind of a High Court Judge. A generation ago, when the tide of pantheistic Liberalism was flooding through American Protestantism with seemingly uncontrollable force, he was the weightiest and ablest of the Evangelical Canutes. This book, first published in 1930, is probably his finest achievement. It remains the classic treatment of its subject. It has been kept in print in America, but for years has been unobtainable in Britain. Now, however, Clarke's admirable policy of reprinting the classics has made it available again, and we are grateful.

Machen argues in masterly and conclusive fashion that the historical evidence for the Virgin Birth is exceedingly strong, and that all hypotheses so far proposed for explaining away the testimony to it are wildly unpalatable. His book may, no doubt, be supplemented—as indeed it has been by Douglas Edwards' *Virgin Birth in History and Faith* (1943), but it is not likely to be superseded. It is technical, though never obscure, and its very thoroughness makes it sometimes long-winded. But it is a most satisfying book to read, and its apologetic relevance is scarcely less now than it was in Machen's day. We quote from the closing paragraph:

"Let it never be forgotten that the Virgin Birth is an integral part of the New Testament witness about Christ, and that that witness is strongest when it is taken as it stands. . . . The New Testament

presentation of Jesus is not an agglomeration, but an organism, and of that organism the Virgin Birth is an integral part. Remove the part, and the whole becomes harder and not easier to accept; the New Testament account of Jesus is most convincing when it is taken as a whole. . . ."

Wise words! and still timely, for the idea that there is positive virtue in peddling truncated Christologies and shrunken Christianities is not dead yet. Books of this calibre, however, will help to stamp it out.

J. I. PACKER.

SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST.

By Jean Steinmann. Longmans. 6/-.

MUHAMMAD AND THE ISLAMIC TRADITION.

By Emile Dermengheim. 6/-.

These two scholarly books, beautifully produced, are part of the Men of Wisdom series which already includes other studies of St. Augustine, Master Eckhart, St. Paul and Buddha.

The lavish illustrations combine with the careful texts and imaginatively chosen source quotations to bring the reader, to an extent unusual in so small a compass, right into the historical setting and repercussions of the religious leaders concerned.

The rôle of the Essene communities in the development of early Christianity, and John's connection with the sect, are shrewdly examined by M. Steinmann. The whole later development of monastic asceticism is seen as stemming from the dramatic breakaway of John, the Essene-trained visionary who popularized their austere and disciplined way of thought and life. John, however, reminds us of the need, now as then, to pierce through the mists of religious tradition and ritual elaboration to a fresh and personal vision of truth. The necessity for a Johannine preparation of self-discipline, like the poor and the Law, is always with us. It can lead to excess, certainly, but that is a spiritual risk which must always be taken. M.R.A. claims to be undertaking a 'new John the Baptist ministry!'

M. Dermengheim, in a balanced critical analysis, shows the sociological drawbacks as well as the spiritual insight of Muhammad and his followers and interpreters. Turkish nationalism led by Mustafa Kemal had to bulldoze through Mohammedan prejudice against women: whereas Christ and His followers have led the way to social justice and sexual equality. The thought-forms of the great Muslim mystics are so close to the Bible that, meeting them here, you wonder at the astounding similarities and at the gulf which, in practice, separates readers of the Koran and readers of the Bible. I quote four Maxims which especially struck me, both for their haunting doctrinal resemblances and their sheer compressed beauty of expression. "He who seeks Me finds Me. He who finds Me knows Me. He who knows Me loves Me. Him who loves Me, I love. Him whom I love I kill. Him whom I kill, it is I who ransom. . . ." "The world is prison for the believer and paradise for the unbeliever." "A moment of love is worth more than seventy years of worship without love." "All the worlds are but a faint perfume from the Rose of eternity."

This is a distinguished series, and the books, with their selective bibliographies, can form the basis for a new understanding of comparative religion for the ordinary interested man and woman.

D. J. MITCHELL.

JOHN VENN AND THE CLAPHAM SECT.

By Michael Hennell. Lutterworth. pp. 295. 30/-.

Not seldom in history has a man found it disadvantageous to his good qualities and achievements to be overshadowed by a more famous father, and hitherto John Venn would seem to have suffered in this respect. Now there comes this scholarly biography to redress the balance. It gives a picture of a man with a great capacity for friendship, though choosing his friends with careful discrimination. It is surprising to find that he was not able to enter into close friendship with Charles Simeon, and not least valuable is the light thrown by the author on a side of Simeon's character not usually portrayed.

The Rector of Little Dunham was hardly a success as a country parson, though the formation of a clerical society made his rectory a centre of Evangelical witness. The change to Clapham was momentous, and served to bring out the qualities of leadership, wise judgment, and preaching ability, which had not hitherto found full scope in Venn's ministry. But this book is not confined to the life and work of John Venn, and of particular interest is the attention given to the work of the Clapham sect as a whole. While the efforts of this group to combat slavery are well known, the social side of their work in England is less familiar, and Mr. Hennell has done well to draw attention to the fact that "Clapham philanthropy was not confined to the West Indies". Organizations for bettering the lot of the poor, who were beginning to feel the effects of the Industrial Revolution with bad factory conditions, slum housing and overcrowding, were encouraged by Venn, and show that this group of men and their friends were certainly not insensitive to the evils on their own doorstep. Most important, however, is John Venn's part in the foundation of the Church Missionary Society, which owed its humble beginnings very largely to his zeal and discretion, ably supported by Simeon, Thomas Scott and Richard Cecil. Mr. Hennell gives a most careful account of the meetings and discussions held. During the first three years of its existence, Venn was the real leader of the Society, very probably drafting its rules, planning its policy and publicity, and acting as chairman at most of its committee meetings. It was he who insisted that everything depended on the quality of the men chosen, and the quotation given from his sermon enumerating the basic characteristics of a Christian missionary are reminiscent of his own good qualities and gifts. Twice he virtually saved the infant Society from dissolution, but his patience and faith were rewarded, and his policy was executed and developed for thirty years by his son, Henry Venn the younger, the ablest of the C.M.S. secretaries of the nineteenth century.

This significant book pays a belated tribute to a notable Evangelical leader. Working from much unpublished material, Mr. Hennell gives us a fascinating picture of the great era of Evangelical witness and influence in the Church. It should be read and pondered both by ecclesiastical and social historians of this period.

G. C. B. DAVIES.

THEOLOGY AND LIFE. UNPUBLISHED SERMONS OF BISHOP HENSLEY HENSON.

With an Introduction by Canon C. J. Stranks. Mowbrays. 10/6.

Bishop Hensley Henson had a reputation as a brilliant preacher. He had a magnificent literary style, sharp, incisive and full of beauty. He took great trouble in preparing his sermons: he respected his hearers and prepared as carefully a sermon for an ordinary parochial congregation as for some distinguished and brilliant gathering. Many who knew him will recollect with affection some of his mannerisms: "Anything," writes Canon Stranks, "which might distract the attention of his audience, even for a moment, annoyed him intensely. Coughing was intolerable. One former choir boy, now a priest, recalls being sent out of church for this offence, but the bishop asked for him after the service and gave him half a crown, so the incident was doubly memorable."

The sermons gathered here are pastoral sermons preached during the ordinary course of the Bishop's duties as Sunday by Sunday he visited the parishes of his great diocese. "Though he had learning and brilliant gifts," writes Canon Stranks, "he never preached to exhibit either. His ideal was a pastoral ministry and he continually sought to impress this upon his clergy." These sermons make it abundantly clear that the Bishop practised what he proclaimed to others. They are straightforward and simple, and full of phrases which, although all else be forgotten, remain in the mind. Here are two typical examples: "This mood of reminiscence comes easily to those who are growing old. It is almost habitual with the aged. Hope is the hall-mark of youth, as remembrance is of age." "Baxter would have been wiser if he had preached to living men as a living man."

O. R. CLARKE.

GREEN LEAF IN DROUGHT.

By Isobel Kuhn. China Inland Mission. pp. 126. 5/- paper.

When western missionaries withdrew from China in 1951 a few members of the C.I.M. were stranded in the far north-west, unable to obtain exit permits. Over two years passed before Dr. Rupert Clarke and Arthur Matthews were released, after considerable sufferings and humiliation at Communist hands.

This book is the story of Arthur and Wilda Matthews and their child, in the isolation and privations at Hwangyuan, based on letters smuggled out, and on their later account of their experiences. It hides nothing—their fears, hopes, despair, and the realization that hidden spiritual resources could bring triumph and patience. The reader is given an insight into the crushing imprisonment of mind and spirit imposed on the Chinese Church by the Reds, and into the courage and love of Christians who refused to be forced into the Communist mould, though others failed.

At the time the long delay seemed inexplicable. "It is clear to us now that the Lord's purpose in deliberately bringing His servants into the net was that they might live their message before the eyes of the weak and frightened little Church." As a story of martyrdom in

many ways worse than death, and of triumph in Christ, this short book should provide an inspiring lesson to Christians everywhere.

J. C. POLLOCK.

GOD AND THE CHILDREN.

By J. Reginald Hill and G. R. Harding Wood. Paternoster Press. pp. 91. 6/-.

The criticism is frequently made that although Sunday School teachers may be enthusiastic, and true lovers of the Lord Jesus Christ, the majority have received no training to equip them for their difficult task. Here is an admirable book by two well-known writers which should be carefully studied by all Sunday School teachers. Its subtitle describes it as "A Handbook for all who love the young and desire to win them for Christ."

The book is divided into three parts. Part I is devoted to the Worker—His Objective; Equipment; Methods and Mistakes; Example. The chapter on the Worker's Equipment is a personal challenge to every teacher regarding his vocation and consecration. In Part II the mental make-up and development of the child are considered, and it is in this section that many teachers may well find the information which they most need. Part III—The Worker and the Child—contains seven chapters which explain how the advice given and principles enumerated in the preceding sections may be applied.

Young Sunday School teachers will find in this book much to help and encourage them, while experienced teachers will discover how their methods and technique may be improved. This is essentially a volume of practical hints and suggestions which have been found valuable in the experience of others, spirituality being combined with common-sense. The book could well be used as a basis for study and discussion in teachers' meetings or study groups. IVOR J. BROMHAM.

GALATIANS: THE CHARTER OF CHRISTIAN LIBERTY.

By Merrill C. Tenney. Pickering & Inglis. pp. 216. 15/-.

This book is a revised edition of an earlier work, the writer stating in the Preface that "the wide use of this book as a classroom text and as a guide to general Bible study has prompted this revision". In this unusual Commentary the writer devotes one chapter to each of ten methods of Bible study. These methods are: the Synthetic; the Critical; the Biographical; the Historical; the Theological; the Rhetorical; the Topical; the Analytical; the Comparative; and the Devotional. Through the inclusion of all these methods in one volume the treatment given to any one method can be neither thorough nor exhaustive. Perhaps the weakest chapter, consisting of only five pages, is that dealing with the devotional method of study. However, an amazing number of facts, theories and comments are here grouped together; sources and authorities are listed, thus facilitating the work of the interested reader who may wish to pursue further some topic; and a useful bibliography is appended. The evidence for and against the various theories and opinions discussed is carefully and fairly summarized. Especially well presented is the evidence for the destination of the Epistle (pp. 46 ff.) and for the date of writing (pp. 58 ff.). This

book would serve as a useful introduction to the study of the Epistle, while many readers will be grateful to Dr. Tenney for the inclusion in one volume, which has obviously been prepared with great care, of such an immense amount of information ideally arranged for easy reference.

IVOR J. BROMHAM.

THE LIFE OF SAINT TERESA.

A new translation by J. M. Cohen. Penguin. pp. 316. 3/6.

In the year 1814, when the French were driven out of Spain, Santa Teresa was proclaimed the National Saint. Her autobiography, covering the first fifty years of her life, had become one of Spain's most widely read classics.

This life, which was written during the Spanish Inquisition, is an account of a self-willed and hysterically unbalanced woman who spent twenty years in a nunnery in a most unsatisfactory spiritual state. At this time she had a complete breakdown in health and also a profound spiritual experience which she calls her second conversion; a conversion to the contemplative life. Teresa has no kind word for Luther, but like him she tries everything the Roman faith offered to find the peace she needed, without avail, until she finds it in the mystical experiences which she attempts to explain in this book. Her natural style, though verbose, is lit up with a wealth of proverb and pithy saying, yet in 316 closely printed pages of spiritual language there seem to be no more than thirty Scriptural references.

The real value of this life, as Dr. Alexander Whyte points out in his *Thirteen Appreciations*, is that here we see a woman who has learned to pray. She perseveres, though racked with constant pain, and has the most remarkable experiences in prayer. On occasions these became embarrassing in their abnormality, as when she was sometimes lifted into the air during prayer, often causing consternation to the sisters praying beside her!

The biographical interest is maintained in the first ten chapters, and then the narrative breaks off and she discourses for a dozen chapters on the successive stages of mental prayer. In chapter 29 we get back to the story of her first foundation, that of the convent of St. Joseph's, Avila, and to the reforms that she inaugurated in the constitutions of her own branch of the Carmelite Order.

G. E. D. PYCHES.

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD.

By R. E. C. Browne. S.C.M. Press. pp. 119. 8/6 (paper).

REVELATION IN CHRIST.

By William Nicholls. S.C.M. Press. pp. 149. 15/-.

Both of these books are excellent reading, academic rather than popular in style. The first is a book about preaching, but the writer seems to have in mind the student type of congregation rather than the general run of people the parochial clergy are likely to address. These are not so much on the alert for the well-turned phrase or the aptly chosen word, as for the vivid and forceful presentation of the message in language whose meaning they can grasp without concentrated thought. The preachers who will reach them best are not those who

comply with the author's assertion that "every authentic proclamation of the Gospel has always a definite indefiniteness about it. The statement that rings with finality is false, it lacks the audacity of truthfulness which intentionally leaves rough edges." He may be correct when he says that there must always be a certain "untidiness of expression", but the present writer does not agree that this must spring from "untidiness of mind". To quote one of his illustrations—when the lover says to his beloved, "I'm always thinking of you," the girl does not say "liar", she says, "I love you too." Surely the man's statement is not due to untidiness of mind, though we admit it is loose in expression. This is not intended to be unduly critical, for the book amply repays study and contains timely teaching. His warning against the use of symbols and terms intelligible fifty years ago, but meaningless to-day, is very much needed. They are indeed inadequate to convey the new facets of the old truths revealed by modern research in many fields of knowledge.

Mr. Nicholls' book will richly repay the close study it calls for. Its theme may be summarized in the familiar phrase, "Christianity is Christ." That is to say that Jesus Christ is not simply the *supreme* revelation of God, as some would say, He is the *only* revelation. The fact that Christianity is not a religion is rightly emphasized. It is essentially a revelation. If this is forgotten too much importance is given to form, ritual, institutionalism. Hinduism, Islam and modern theistic Buddhism give us man's conception of a supreme being or beings. In Christianity God reveals himself to man and seeks him. "We always want to think of revelations as the communication of truths," says Mr. Nicholls, but "revelation is simply the person who is in our midst, who lives in heaven and in His Body on earth".

The author's aim is to meet the needs of three kinds of people—beginners in theology, instructed laity, though these as he says "must be willing to follow a closely reasoned and not always easy argument", and many of the clergy "concerned to examine the fundamental basis of the mission of the Church, whether at home or abroad". The present reader, while by no means agreeing with all his statements, thinks that he has succeeded in his aim. W. N. CARTER.

WINDSOR SERMONS.

By Alec R. Vidler. S.C.M. Press. pp. 191. 15/-.

GOODNESS AND TRUTH.

By W. R. Inge. Mowbray (Sermons of To-day Series). pp. 190. 13/6.

Canon Vidler has selected twenty-eight of his own sermons, nearly all preached without special reference, and to his ordinary Windsor congregation. Of these, twelve are expository of Bible subjects, seven are concerned with aspects of the life of prayer, and the remainder either are what he calls "Approach Shots", or deal with "words" such as Jerusalem, guidance, animals, and so on. The sermons are as charming to read as they must have been enthralling to hear: simple, biblical, devotional, evangelical, practical and suggestive, they are in the best tradition of pastoral teaching.

As is to be expected, Dean Inge's sermons strike a different note.

Here is a choice, culled by Prebendary Judd from a collection covering fifty years, of some of the Dean's public utterances : many of these sermons were preached on special occasions, most (though not all) in St. Paul's. They show vast erudition, and illustrate both the diversity and the profundity of Dr. Inge's learning. Those mordant phrases for which he was famous are by no means unrepresented ; e.g., " The religion of the average man is a reflection of his undisciplined self—an unassorted mixture of second-hand opinions, conceived in laziness and maintained in obstinacy " (p. 157). But it would not be fair to quote as typical what is really exceptional ; Inge suffered too much from that in his lifetime ; and the volume before us is part of the legacy to our Church of a great Christian thinker, challenging our minds to come to grips with facts and problems, and refusing to be fobbed off with clichés or shallow answers.

One might comment that a comparison between Inge's sermon on " Evil Spirits " and Vidler's on " The Devil " provides an illuminating instance of the variety of Anglican preaching at its best.

D. F. HORSEFIELD.

NOTES ON BOOKS RECEIVED

The Longest Night by Ada Lewis (*Heinemann*, 16/-) is an historical novel set in sixteenth century France. A knowledgeable freedom of treatment lights up the dark mazes of dynasticism, and the main focus of interest is on a party of terrified Huguenots escaping from Paris after the great 1572 massacre of Saint Bartholomew's Eve. Some real insight is shown into both sides of the question, and there is much honest excitement.

The Coming World Civilization by William Ernest Hocking (*Allen & Unwin*, 16/-) is an urbanely prophetic little essay by a veteran American thinker. The writing is highly concentrated, almost a kind of polysyllabic shorthand : it gives one a sensation of loneliness, like being left alone among the huge bones of prehistory in a large museum. But this old brain seems to have crushed out the essences of spiritual endeavour in a slow, sincere way which makes this more than just another essay on comparative religion. In a long section on Christianity and the Interaction Among World Religions, Hocking gives his reasons for believing that at last, in enforced contact with the religions of the East, Christianity will lose its European parochialism, and the universality of Christ will take on a new meaning. He also sees the need for a new surge of prophetic fanaticism which alone can rescue Christianity from irrelevance and triviality. He singles out Schweitzer and Gandhi as examples of this quality. This is Christian humanism at a rather ponderous best. Marcus Aurelius or Plato had more spiritual verve.

Religions, by D. W. Gundry (*Macmillans*, 16/-). This is a wonderfully balanced and lucid historical and theological survey of religion. The author is Dean of the Faculty of Theology in the University of North Wales and brings to his task the scrupulousness of a scholar as well as the faith of a Christian. After a masterly tour, he contrasts the exquisite penetrations of a poem by George Herbert with the deadly embalming of much orthodox theology which bears about as much relation to the living Christ as a dressed-up corpse in an American funeral parlour does to the living loved one. Discarding religious syncretism, he sees only two real alternatives—to decide to have no religion at all, or to accept the flesh-and-blood challenge of Christ incarnate. Christians may still, as they have in the past, " bring into the Church gradually . . . such features from other religions as will add to her riches. But . . . what we shall honestly want to borrow . . . will be very little ; for the Church contains riches which most of her members have not fully discovered ". With an excellent bibliography and chronological table, this is a book which opens perspectives *and* calls for a decision. It is a godsend for students of all ages.

Sins of the Day (*Longmans*, 4/6), a 75-page book which reflects the current groping towards a popular moral theology which will not lose its edge by being too general nor put off the average reader by being too circumstantial. Five people of varied professions—parish priest, barrister, research worker, student, housewife—helped to compile this suggestive and sometimes witty framework in the form of an up-to-date litany. It is suggested in the foreword that the various chapters could easily be adapted for public worship as intercession or litany. E.g., "From seeking popularity or attempting to be original at all costs, Good Lord deliver us." "From reading and meditating for no other purpose than a sermon. . . ." "From not regarding the opportunity to study as a privilege. . . ." "From encouraging young men to sow wild oats. . . ." "From holding as unimportant the sexual side of marriage. . . ." "From owing allegiance to the Church because it welds society together, is anti-Communist or maintains cultural values dear to the heart. . . ." "From considering clients as necessary evils. . . ." "From taking part in a strike without finding out its causes or whether they are just. . . ." There are fifteen sections for different age-groups and professions. This is a shrewd puff at those ecclesiastical cobwebs which are being blown at these days from such different quarters as *Crusade*, *Church Illustrated*, and Lord Altrincham. Individually or liturgically this is a useful and imaginative contribution.

Anxiety in Christian Experience, by Wayne E. Oates (*Allen & Unwin*, 15/-). This meaty portion from an American minister combines wide knowledge of current psychotherapeutic techniques with wide pastoral experience and a firm, flexible and simple faith. General conclusions are backed up by detailed, and often very moving, case histories. The nine chapters deal with various aspects of human anxiety—Economic Anxiety, Finitude (or Eschatological) Anxiety, the Anxiety of Grief, the Anxiety of Sin, Legalistic Anxiety, the Anxiety Reactions of the Morally Indifferent, the Anxiety of the Cross, the Anxiety of Holy Dread, Anxiety and the Fellowship of Concern. For all those deeply concerned with a pastoral ministry, this book provides a mine of insight and tenderly applied Biblical concern. No doubt each of us must learn by personal experience to dissolve the very real barriers which block off one human being from another. But Mr. Oates' analysis of the polite hypocrisy of the visiting-minister-tea-giving-parishioner relationship (and its background of Pharisaical legalism) should help to set many minds working on the right lines, and could minimize the frustrations of the young curate. Leslie Weatherhead has done much valuable work on this, but Mr. Oates gives an analysis in greater depth. Some psychological systems, and much wishful mass thinking and journalism, have as a main object the removal of anxiety, of material and mental suffering. One of the constant themes of this pondered but seldom ponderous essay is that anxiety alone drives us on to grapple with life and to adjust to it: that the great problem is how to make anxiety and suffering fruitful, how to take Christ's Cross upon our shoulders. "Man cannot plan to be safe by caring less. This is the way of the morally indifferent . . . it is one of the basic facts of human life that the *ungiven* self is the *unfulfilled* self."

Being a Christian, by J. R. W. Stott (*I.V.F.*, 2d.) is a highly effective booklet which follows up Mr. Stott's *Becoming a Christian*.
