

conceptions which demonstrably originated outside the field of the Old and New Testaments—as in primitive Semitic religion, or in Greek philosophy—are taken up as integral elements of the Christian revelation (however transformed in the process) and must therefore be of the same stuff. Thirdly, our whole response to life is largely moulded by our place in history. This is true of Christians, as of all men, and it was true of the prophets and apostles through whom the Word of God came. It seems likely that before (if we may so distinguish) the Word of God came to them, there was something which predisposed them to receive it; and this can have been no other than the prevenient grace of God working upon them in and through their historical environment.

It is, in fact, impossible to isolate the Church, the field of God's special revelation in Christ, as if it were an inviolable *enclave* within humanity. Its centre is in Christ, but it has no ultimate circumference short of the whole of mankind. The Church is the *ἀπαρχή* of the race, and we may apply the Pauline maxim, 'If the firstfruit is holy, so is the lump' (Ro 11<sup>16</sup>). What is affirmed of the Church is not denied of humanity at large. In the Church we are sons of God, but that is not to deny that He is the Father of all men. In the Church we are brothers, but not to the denial of our wider brotherhood. Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for it; but Christ also gave Himself for the sins of the whole world. The Holy Spirit works in the Church, but to deny His operation in the world would be to put a limit to the power and love of God which are the very content of His revelation in Christ.

Indeed, the Christian believer, who has in some measure received the revelation of God in Christ (by grace, not of merit), has the best right to affirm the reality of His revelation in nature and history at large, because the God who reveals Himself in Christ is such that we must believe Him to care for all men, and therefore to give them knowledge of Himself as they are able to receive it. And if that general revelation is but dimly apprehended, even we who have the special revelation and the witness of the Spirit see only in a glass darkly. It is true that in sending Christ God created a new thing in the earth, and that in sending the Spirit He conferred upon men a specific capacity for knowing what He had done; but the 'fulness of time' at which Christ came was prepared by the mysterious working of divine Providence over the whole field of history, and the mind of man was prepared for the illumination that came at Pentecost by all hints of truth that have broken the darkness of our fallen estate.

The perspective of revelation is set forth in the Prologue to the Fourth Gospel. Here, while the Word in the beginning with God is logically prior, the *πρότερον πρὸς ἡμᾶς* is the Word made flesh, where alone for men clear knowledge of God is given ('He that hath seen me hath seen the Father'). Starting there, we are led back to the Word of God as it came to Israel through the prophets (11-12), back again to the Word as the light that lighteneth every man that cometh into the world (1<sup>9</sup>), and yet again to the Word as constitutive of the whole creation (1<sup>3</sup>). We read the revelation of God in history and in nature by the light of His self-revelation in Christ.

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## Literature.

### THEISM AND COSMOLOGY.

A RECENT Gifford lecturer attempted to satisfy the requirements of the Gifford Trust by showing that all theology was kerygmatic and that there was no such thing as natural theology. Professor John Laird is firmly convinced that there is a place for natural theology, and that a philosophical consideration of Nature can produce certain valuable results. But he treats it rather after the manner of a stern parent, and will not allow it to lay claim to any

unjustified conclusions. In this first series of lectures he confines himself strictly within the limits indicated by the title—*Theism and Cosmology* (Allen & Unwin; 10s. 6d. net)—and it would perhaps be unfair to estimate them without reference to the promise of the second series in which he proposes to deal with the subject of 'Mind and Deity' and will include vital topics which are here omitted. In the present volume Professor Laird is laying the foundations, and although he holds that natural theology must always be less than Christian, he resolutely

refuses to remove its limitations by making use of any data which do not come within his purview. Still, even with these limitations, he thinks that the enquiry is very much worth while.

He digs his foundations deep, drilling downwards by the power of a penetrative mind, and making use sometimes of highly technical phraseology, employing words which are not to be found in any ordinary dictionary. It must be confessed that his foundations are better than his superstructure, and that the latter does not rise very far above the ground. But what there is of it is very solidly based, and the author himself has a kind of wistful regret that there is not more to show for his labours. The essence of the cosmological argument is, according to him, that the world which exists is self-insufficient, and requires a divine complement, but he is doubtful about the usual arguments in favour of the first half of the statement, and more than doubtful about the transition to the second half, speaking sarcastically about the 'airy vacuity of assuming that inconclusive proofs raise a presumption in favour of their professed conclusion.' His own position is roughly pantheistic, but not crudely so. He reaches the conclusion that the world is intrinsically deiform, and that a godless world is a misconstrued world. But, though he does not altogether deny their possibility, he places little reliance upon cosmological arguments to a supra-mundane deity. This comes out most clearly in his discussion of the teleological argument. He finds teleology in Nature, but it is an inherent teleology and *not* a planned teleology. He has the greatest respect for teleology, but none at all for the argument from design. Perhaps in his second series he will raise a more conspicuous superstructure upon the foundation of inherent teleology which he has here laid so wisely and well.

#### CHRISTIANITY AND MORALS.

Under the above title Dr. Edward Westermarck has given us a portly volume (Kegan Paul ; 23s. net). Dr. Westermarck's views on ethics are already well known, and his eminence as an anthropologist is unassailable. This work is a mine, or rather treasure-house, of information which may be at once accepted as reliable, of beliefs and practices of many peoples. We agree to a large extent with Dr. Westermarck's contention that the claims made so often from the pulpit and in popular 'apologetics' that all that is worth while in our civilization and morals is directly and solely due to Christianity is historically unsound in the sense that many a virtue inculcated by Christianity had

been already inculcated. The shock may be a salutary one—to discover that in some respects the spread of Christianity was marked not by a heightening of ethical practice but by a lowering. The fundamental cause of this according to the author was the Pauline doctrine of salvation by faith alone, and other worldliness. Opinions will differ here, and probably most believers will feel that the case has been exaggerated. What seems to us the main defect of a notable work is the failure to realize that civilization and in consequence ethics was not continuous from the early days of Christianity onwards. From the fourth century for a millennium civilization and culture in Western Europe were first gradually all but obliterated and as gradually coming to new vigour. In that preservation of such light as there was and that fresh dawn the part played by the Church was greater than so far as we can see Dr. Westermarck allows.

#### THE REFORMED CHURCHES AND MINISTERIAL ORDER.

The Rev. James L. Ainslie, B.D., Ph.D., parish minister at Kirkfieldbank, has enriched Scottish theological literature with his book on *The Doctrines of Ministerial Order in the Reformed Churches of the 16th and 17th Centuries* (T. & T. Clark ; 7s. 6d. net). That so large and so good a book should be published at so low a cost at the present time does credit to the publishers, and we hope their faith will be justified by the public reception of the work. By 'Reformed Churches' Dr. Ainslie understands those churches which adopted more or less fully the Presbyterian polity ; and he holds—rightly in our opinion—that 'Ministerial Order' is better than the more familiar 'Orders.'

He is concerned to show the problems that faced the 'Reformed Churches' as to ministerial order and how they solved it. On the one hand, they attached no value to any mechanical 'succession' ; on the other hand, they were concerned to do all things 'decently and in order.' While they emphasized the Godward side of leading by the Spirit they no less took all safeguards against the kind of abuse to which a charismatic ministry is exposed, by giving great importance to examination of candidates for ordination.

There has been a tendency among some Presbyterians to fall back overmuch on some theory of 'Apostolic Succession.' Dr. Ainslie shows how confused and uncertain and unsatisfactory such theories are. That we should agree with every word Dr. Ainslie writes is not important. His

main contention is of great importance—that to be called of God and imbued with God's Spirit is the primary qualification of a true minister of the gospel.

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*What Masonry Means*, by Mr. William E. Hammond (Allen & Unwin ; 5s. net), is an attempt to give a 'clear conception of Masonry as a unified system of moral instruction.' As a result we have half a score of short chapters full of wholesome, if commonplace, moral teaching, spiced with masonic terminology. 'Masonry undertakes to discipline men—chisel, square, level, plumb and polish them—into the quality and shape essential to the realization of its dream of a worthy social order.' There is nothing distinctive in this, but doubtless it will be all to the good if every mason, inspired by the bee-hive emblem of industry and warned by the scythe and sand-glass of the flight of time, should gird on the lamb-skin apron of purity and diligently ply the trowel to spread the cement of brotherly love. The book is commended in a Foreword by Dr. Fort Newton, who in one of his own works has told us that there are three types of Masonry, the Italian which is atheistic, the German which is Christian, and the British and American which is theistic. The book before us appears to belong to the last type.

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*Freedom and Culture*, by Professor John Dewey (Allen & Unwin ; 7s. 6d. net), is a difficult book to read, but it goes to the heart of the matter, at least so far as this is possible for a humanist of the type of Professor Dewey. His thesis is that freedom must be, not negative and abstract, but positive and in concrete relations to actual conditions. By negative freedom he means the kind of freedom which is content merely with the destruction of existing oppressive limitations, and tends, under the influence of popular slogans, unduly to simplify its methods of investigation and action. Towards such an attitude the conditions under which American democracy came into being were peculiarly favourable. The men who founded it had just emerged from a struggle against established authority and freedom from dependence on the past was for them all-important ; moreover, they were in a new country with abundant untapped resources demanding original methods for their utilization. The situation resulted in an almost wholly uncritical acceptance of generalized democratic principles, for, according to our author, most of the criticism of democracy arises out of the persistence of 'entrenched dispositions' in traditions, customs, and institutions

which were in existence when there was as yet no such thing as democracy.

The failures of democracy have been due, Professor Dewey thinks, mainly to its abstract character. The ideas of the inherent freedom of man and his fundamental rights irrespective of his concrete conditions, resulted in the *laissez faire* policy, the inadequacy of which was concealed by the fact that it took to itself the credit of increased prosperity which was really due to the release, by scientific discovery and consequent control over Nature, of man's capacity for production. The practical antinomy, however, with which we find ourselves confronted, is that freedom has been unable to maintain itself except by organization, and organization, again, especially in the economic sphere, has proved itself inimical to freedom. Professor Dewey's contention is that there can be no general solution of our problems. The Marxist all-comprehensive formula, depending entirely, ostensibly at least, upon external conditions, is full of inner contradictions. The doctrine of older democracy that its main principles are founded on the nature of man, tells us nothing as to how the capacities of human nature are to be connected with the ideal in concrete conditions. The theory that the dominant psychological motives are unlimited competitiveness and limited sympathy, gets us nowhere, and the spirit of 'enterprise,' which has been so much upheld in the advocacy of democracy, is morally neutral. Professor Dewey appeals for the application to democracy of the scientific attitude, in close association with art, as a means of linking ideas with emotions. Science must cease to assert that it is indifferent to the ends for which its discoveries may be used. It must shoulder responsibility for these, and must try to offer guidance in the choice of ends as well as means. There is need of a mobilization of scientists in co-operative effort for the good of society, so that no longer will their achievements result mainly in the destruction of man in war or the economic furtherance of the interests of particular classes. Science must seek above all to create a morale of fair-mindedness, intellectual integrity, and a subordination of personal prejudices to ascertained facts. Otherwise, the only alternative is the conflict of irrational forces and the triumph of Totalitarianism. We must never forget that democratic ends demand democratic methods, if the ideal of democracy is to be realized. This ideal is, in the words of Professor Dewey, 'to secure and maintain an ever-increasing release of the powers of human nature, in service of a freedom which is co-operative, and a co-operation which is voluntary.'

Under the title '*Dawson the Doctor: G. E. Dodson of Iran*—suggestive of local colour in pronunciation and popularity with the people amongst whom he worked—the Church Missionary Society have published a well-written biography of one of their missionaries in Iran (1s. 6d. net). There are no high-lights in the story, and the experiences of Dr. Dodson are similar to those of many pioneer medical missionaries. But we are made vividly to realize the sense of need, the ability to meet that need in particular cases, the gradual growth of confidence amongst the different classes, the appalling inadequacy of resources, the struggle against difficulties such as lack of money and the hesitations of the home authorities, the ultimate triumph in the building of the hospital, almost coincident with the sacrificial death of the Doctor who was the inspiration of the activities; and throughout all the unmistakable penetration into the hearts of the people of the spirit of the gospel of Christ. All these things are movingly told in a narrative which holds the attention from start to finish.

Two books come from the Epworth Press on the theme of religious education, and both deserve to be read since they are by experts and also by men of outstanding gifts. *The Christian and Education*, by W. G. Humphrey, M.A., D.Phil., Headmaster of the Leys School, Cambridge, deals with the function of the school for the most part. But Dr. Humphrey is not concerned merely with the religious lesson. He is a man of vision, and deals with the function of religious education as a factor in the re-making of our social system. His whole argument, conducted in such a spirit of moderation and so persuasive on that account, deserves to be widely considered. We have seldom met with a more enlightened discussion of a subject that is of vital importance at the present time.

The other book is by the Chaplain of the same school, the Rev. Conrad Skinner, M.A., *A Boy's Right to Religion; A Schoolmaster's Appeal to Parents*. As the title indicates, this is a book on the contribution which the home may make to the religious training of the child. It would be impossible to exaggerate the urgency of Mr. Skinner's subject. And if his admirable book reaches its goal it will perform a great service for the cause he has at heart. Both books are published at the modest price of one shilling.

Two more of Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton's 'Black Jacket' series have been issued, and they are both interesting and useful. One is *Daily Read-*

*ings from the Moffatt Translation of the Bible* (2s. 6d. net). The book is meant to 'bring the reader into the presence of the great affirmations of the Bible.' There are two sections in each page devoted to one day of the year. The one deals with conduct, the other with faith. The selection is judicious, and the reading of these fine passages is sure to bring the reader that shock of reality which the translation often does. The type is smallish but clear, and the book will be a treasure to many, and perhaps send them to the complete translation to read the Bible as a whole.

This, at any rate, is the purpose of the other book, *A Digest of the Bible*, arranged and edited by Peter V. Ross (2s. 6d. net). It is difficult to describe this book. It is a kind of summary of the Bible with large sections of the text of Scripture embodied in a kind of narrative. So far as one can judge from a selective testing, the thing is very well done. The editor, compiler or digester, calculates that if you read fifty pages in an evening you can get over the Bible (in his digest) in less than a week. Then, of course, your appetite whetted, you will go on to read the Bible for yourself, not unhelpt by Mr. Ross's guidance. The enterprise was worth attempting and the result is satisfactory, possibly a good deal more.

A new edition of the *Book of Common Order of the Church of Scotland* has been made, and is introduced by the lamented Dr. Oswald Milligan, whose recent death has been a serious loss to his Church (Oxford University Press; 5s. net, leather 6s. 6d. net). The new edition combines the best features of the two books already authorized by the Church: 'Prayers for Divine Services,' 1923 and 1929, and the 'Book of Common Order,' 1928. Dr. Milligan gives in his Preface an intelligent account of the Church's desire to provide forms of service while jealously maintaining the right of free prayer. He also indicates the extent to which new material has been provided. There are, for example, four orders for the celebration of the Lord's Supper (one for private communion). There are considerably more prayers for the observance of the Christian Year as well as for special graces. The book is beautifully produced, and will be a great help to ministers for their guidance and for the enrichment of their public devotions.

*Supreme Governor* (S.P.C.K.; 6s. net), by J. V. P. Thompson, M.A., formerly Exhibitioner of Trinity College, Cambridge, is a study of Elizabethan ecclesiastical policy and circumstance. It is pointed out that the so-called Elizabeth Settlement repre-

sented an attempt on the part of the Church of England to justify its claim to be comprehensive. The effort was made to combine something of the traditional ritual and organization dear to Romanism with a doctrinal position calculated to win the acceptance of Calvinists (though the position affirmed was Zwinglian rather than Calvinistic). But it was its political expediency rather than its making for ecclesiastical comprehension that commended the Settlement to the Queen.

In reviewing the terms of the Elizabethan Settlement the author, whose book is a solid and learned contribution to its subject, discusses in particular the early difficulties with which the enforcement of the Settlement met and the measures taken to deal with the Romanist menace, while the development of Puritanism is also outlined. In the closing chapter, 'The Settlement and the Supremacy,' it is pointed out that if there might be uncertainty as to the precise theological standpoint of the Elizabethan Church, there could be no mistaking the fact that it was a State Church, having the Queen as its effective Governor.

*Paul, the Herald of God*, by Sibyl Owsley (S.P.C.K. ; 2s. 6d. net), tells the story of the Apostle very simply and with fidelity to the original. The only expansion is inspired by knowledge of the life of a Greek city in the first century of the Christian era. This would be a very interesting introduction to the adventurous life of St. Paul for a child and would help to make the New Testament a living book. There are four excellent maps, and many illustrations. The book is a real achievement and deserves to be widely circulated.

The Student Christian Movement Press has issued an edition of Dr. Walter M. Horton's *Contemporary English Theology* (8s. 6d. net). The book, written by an American theologian for Americans, 'has two main purposes : to promote a better understanding of English theology among my compatriots ; and to cast light upon the present crisis of Liberal theology in America by describing the similar crisis through which Liberal theology in England has recently passed.' To the English reader the book is not so fresh and informing as the author's more recent work on 'Contemporary Continental Theology,' but it is good to see ourselves as others see us, and we have here a very sane and well-

balanced account of some of the main tendencies in recent English theology. As the writer is specially interested in Liberalism in theology it is perhaps excusable that he gives so much attention to the early writings of R. J. Campbell, but one would venture to say that Campbell never had the influence in the English theological world which is accredited to him here. The general conclusion reached is that there is manifest a certain 'central trend' in all the streams of English theology—Catholic, Protestant, and Liberal, which makes itself felt in the Central Party in the Church of England and in the various movements towards union. Of this central trend Archbishop Temple may be taken as a representative. It should be understood that Scottish theologians do not come within the scope of this survey.

A very useful little book of devotion is *A Pocket-Book of Prayers*, for those on active service and those at home, by the Rev. Geoffrey H. Woolley, V.C., M.C., M.A. (S.C.M. ; 1s. net). The book is designed to help people, whether on service or not, to form habits of prayer and to guide them in their praying. Some of the prayers are from recognized sources, some by the compiler himself. They are all brief and edifying, some of them beautiful acts of devotion. The little book would make a very acceptable present to a soldier, a sailor, or airman. It slips easily into the pocket of a uniform, and would be a helpful companion to many a man who is far away from other helps.

*God at Work : A Study of the Supernatural* is a reprint of a book which Dr. William Adams Brown published in America some six years ago (S.C.M. ; 6s. net). It deals with the influence of the supernatural in human life as this is seen in the experiences of personal religion. It gives us some serviceable definitions, and expounds most helpfully the life of faith in relation to the mentality of the modern man. Its treatment of fundamental problems is clear, almost too facile, and leaves one with the feeling that the conclusions have been reached rather too rapidly. The description of the scientific attitude is slightly out of date, but there are many people who, without knowing it, are still struggling with back-number difficulties in this connexion, and these will find Dr. Adams Brown's book most illuminating.