

NOTES ON RECENT BOOKS.

THE Bishop of London's book for Lent has this year been written by himself. It is *Everyman's Problems and Difficulties* (Longmans Green & Co., 2s. 6d. net). For thirty years this series of books has been issued and the Bishop has secured the help of a number of prominent Churchmen in their production. This year he has been induced by the Publishers and by the wishes of his friends to write the thirtieth of the series. The Archbishop of Canterbury has written an Introduction in which he speaks of the Bishop's long personal experience of which this book is a record, candid, severe, and persuasive. This springs from his radiant conviction of the truth of that Gospel of which the Bishop has been an Apostle, not only in London, but in all parts of the world. The arguments of the book are put with the Bishop's characteristic directness and terseness and are illustrated by many vivid and apt quotations. But the witness of actual experience is always more effective than argument. From his own experience of "Joy and Peace in Believing" the Bishop desires to impart to others its source in his belief in God, in the Incarnation, in the Atonement, and in the work of the Holy Spirit. The obstacles to this Peace and Joy are persistent doubt, unconfessed and unforgiven sin, the wrong of keeping up a quarrel, and the recurrence of bad thoughts or haunting temptations. The Bishop sets out his belief in the popular style with which we are familiar from his other writings, and illustrates his points with numerous useful illustrations.

Those who are interested in the poetry of Wordsworth will find an attractive study of the development of his religious life in a little book *The Religion of Wordsworth*, by A. D. Martin (George Allen & Unwin, 3s. 6d. net). Based on a letter to Sir John Beaumont, in which the poet said that the religion of gratitude cannot mislead us and that gratitude was the handmaid of hope, and hope the harbinger of faith, Mr. Martin traces the stages through which the poet passed as they are reflected in his writings both in verse and prose concerning nature, humanity, friendship and the Bible, till the full meaning of his reference to the religion of gratitude is made clear. The author has made an exhaustive study of Wordsworth's writings and has used for his purpose extracts which illustrate his theme. He defends the orthodoxy of the poet in his later days when he wrote the Ecclesiastical Sonnets which some have regarded as the expression of a narrowing view of religion. The apex of his creed was reached as "the natural outcome of his meditations upon Nature, Humanity, Friendship and the Bible, no imposed and no chosen belief, but the inevitable persuasion of his nature, the cumulative effect of a synthesis that bound together individual inspirations and the verified experiences of the Holy Catholic Church."

Canon Peter Green took part last year in a Mission in Cambridge University and delivered a course of addresses to the undergraduates in St. Edward's Church. They are published by the Student Christian Movement Press as *Faith and Service*; God's Call to Youth To-day. The titles of the addresses are: The Foundations of Belief, God and Man, The Incarnation and the Atonement, The Church and the Sacraments, and the Life of Service. They are intended to lead their hearers to think out the subjects for themselves, and like all Canon Green's writing, they are illustrated in an interesting and attractive way from his own personal experiences and reading. They should be specially helpful to those who are dealing with the youthful and thoughtful outlook of to-day.

The Rev. Edward Beal, Minister of Dudthorpe Church of Scotland, Dundee, has written "Some Disjointed Essays with a Recurrent Theme" under the general title, *A Gospel You Can Believe* (Messrs. James Clarke & Co., 3s. 6d. net). Dr. J. M'Connachie contributes an Introduction and speaks of the author's wide knowledge of men and things and his deep insight into the common human heart, gained by travel and contact with different races and peoples. "Mr. Beal is nothing if not a preacher" and the truth of this judgment is revealed in the essays which are really sermons in which the recurrent theme is the Cross of Jesus. Christianity rings true. It is a message of sacrifice in the example of Christ as "A Young Man Crucified." Many important modern problems are treated with most helpful discrimination, and the Christian faith is commended in a way which shows that thoughtful people can believe in the Gospel. The essays contain many arresting and suggestive thoughts which may be of special use to preachers.

Messrs. George Allen & Unwin publish an account of the work which has been done for the *Refugees from Germany* (6s. net) both Jewish and non-Jewish by the various philanthropic organizations during the last two years. The author is Norman Bentwich, Director of the High Commission for Refugees from Germany, and a Foreword is contributed by Viscount Cecil of Chelwood. It provides a record of the useful work that has been done on behalf of the unfortunate victims of the Nazi regime and shows that there is still much to be done for the prevention of distress.

A First Church History (S.C.M. Press, 6s. net), by Vera E. Walker, represents an excellent idea, but we cannot recommend Evangelicals to adopt it as a handbook, partly on account of its presentation of "Catholicism," and partly on account of her treatment of the Tractarian Movement. One paragraph states: "The early Tractarians had set out to teach people; the later ones began to express that teaching in worship. Once more the Eucharist was celebrated with joyful and splendid ceremony, the candles were lit, and the Priest wore the vestments of the Catholic Church."

The Dean of St. Paul's delivered some time ago four Broadcast Addresses on the subject of Immortality. They are published with the title, *The Hope of Immortality* (S.C.M. Press, 2s. 6d. net). The titles of the four talks are : The Idea of Immortality ; Human Reason and the Hope of Immortality ; The Christian Hope ; and Answers to Questions. The addresses are naturally popular in style as a full treatment of the subject would require a large treatise. The Dean suggests such a work may be possible in the future and we are sure that it will receive a warm welcome. The present Talks put a number of facts before those who have no deep knowledge of Theology or Philosophy but desire to attain a reasonable faith on the matters which most deeply concern their lives. The first address deals with problems of mind and body and leads on to the belief in God which underlies the hope of Immortality. The third deals with the nature of the Christian hope while the Answers to Questions reveal the immense interest aroused by the course, and the nature of the difficulties most generally felt.

Dr. Lowther Clarke has written a small handbook on *Almsgiving* (S.P.C.K., 2s. net) which will be read with great interest especially by clerical readers. He was led to write on the subject by a feeling of antagonism aroused by official literature on Almsgiving. He divides his subject into two parts, the Historical in which he traces giving down from Old Testament times, through the Gospels, the Early Church, the Reformation Age, to the present day. The section dealing with the origin of tithe and Church dues will be found specially interesting with the definite illustrations that are given. In the Practical section he makes some severe criticism on the Church Assembly Report on Christian Stewardship where a distinction is made between gifts for Church expenses and contributions for other objects. He shows that the distinction is fallacious. We notice that he does not accept the interpretation that in the phrase in the Communion Service "Alms and Oblations" the latter are supposed to be the Bread and Wine. The practical problems touch also the future methods of raising funds for Church work, and some useful warnings are given.

The Archbishop of York on his tour in the United States of America delivered four lectures at the College of Preachers, Washington, which are published by S.P.C.K. under the title, *The Preacher's Theme To-day* (2s. 6d. net). The titles of the four lectures are : Revelation, The Incarnation, Sin and Atonement, and Christianity, Ethics, and Politics. It is needless to say that Dr. Temple treated these subjects with a view to explaining them in the light of modern problems. He deals with them from a philosophical point of view, but the student need not expect that he is going to find some easily managed themes for sermons. He will find that the Archbishop is dealing with the great underlying principles, and as the lectures were followed by Group discussion they were evidently designed to give leading points for further elaboration and debate.