

Book Reviews

ROMANISM AND EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANITY

By F. J. Paul, M.A., D.D. (Hodder & Stoughton) 16s.

It is a pleasure to introduce readers of *THE CHURCHMAN* to this extremely interesting and well-written examination of the origins and development of the Roman Catholic and Protestant interpretations of Christianity. It embodies the Cunningham Lectures which were delivered by Dr. Paul in the Martin Hall, New College, Edinburgh, in the year 1938. Karl Barth was delivering the Gifford Lectures in Aberdeen about the same time on "The Knowledge of God and the Service of God according to the Teaching of the Reformation." These lectures have also been published in uniform binding with Dr. Paul's volume by the same publishers. They are both notable contributions to Evangelical thought and witness. Alas! the present war will make a vast difference in the steadily growing strength of the Evangelical churches and in the literary output of its scholars.

The author begins by telling us that he received his first communication from Sir William Robertson Nicoll about twenty years ago. That distinguished journalist and bookman told him that he wished Dr. Paul to write a book on this subject since he had so many distraught appeals from parents and guardians asking him to recommend a good book on the subject. "Since that date several books have appeared, some of them able and learned works, but," says the author, "I do not think they have met the want felt by Dr. Robertson Nicoll." What did the Editor of the *British Weekly* feel was wanted? He felt the need of a book which would approach the Roman Question from the historical point of view. "The real argument against the Church of Rome seems to me"—(he wrote)—"the argument derived from her history."

Twenty years have passed and Dr. Paul has continued those studies which made Dr. Nicoll, the discoverer of men like Sir James Barrie, feel that he was the man for this task. He is Professor of Church History and Principal of the Presbyterian College, Belfast. He is obviously equipped by scholarship and experience. It is not often that a work of first-class theological importance issues from the "Isle of Saints," and "The School of Learning." This is easily the most notable book produced by any Irish theologian since the publication of *Infallibility*, by the late Dr. Salmon.

The present reviewer had, more than thirty years ago, the great and priceless opportunity of being able to make a close and intensive study of Roman Catholicism in Ireland where he lived and worked for eight years. Dr. Paul, as we have noted, is in Ireland and he also mentions quite incidentally on page 261 that he was once a student in Madrid. He has seen Romanism at close quarters. Romanism in England differs profoundly in culture, outward toleration, and

courtesy from the variety which is found in so-called Catholic countries, and, just as Canon W. P. Hares is discovering the true nature of Rome by his contacts in India with its aggressions and false claims, so Dr. Paul writes with first-hand knowledge.

We think he is right in his belief that the best point on which to compare the two conceptions of Christianity is in their doctrine of the Church. Nevertheless he begins with the attitude adopted by the Romans and Evangelicals to Holy Scripture. "In the Roman Church," he says, "tradition dethroned Scripture in the sixteenth century; in the nineteenth century (1870) Tradition in its turn is vanquished by the Papacy. The Pope is the *tertius quidens* who, when Scripture and Tradition have mutually weakened each other, emerges victorious over both." He then proceeds to examine the doctrine of the Church in Romanism with reference to its Unity, Sanctity, Catholicity, and Apostolicity, and also the further "note," according to Roman dogma, of its Infallibility. Speaking of the use of Latin in her services he writes: "The Church in which all the most important rites are performed, throughout the world, in a 'dead language' may impress the unthinking, but valuable elements are absent from her services which are present in an American negro meeting round a camp fire." He finds after a careful historical review in which he exhibits his understanding and grasp of all the literature of the subject that the Papal Institution has been put in the place of Christ. The Sacraments then come under review and there is a specially interesting chapter on Indulgences. Others follow in which the places of St. Peter, the Papacy, the Priesthood and the Virgin Mary are discussed as well as the use of Relics and other superstitious devotions.

We are struck by the freedom of this book from bias and bigotry. No Roman Apologist would write so fairly of Protestantism as Dr. Paul has done of Romanism, yet he puts his finger mercilessly and unerringly on the historical facts and failures which have made the Church of Rome threaten Protestants with hell because we refuse to believe what we know to be untrue. His closing remark seems perfectly just: "Such a hell is less to be feared than the heaven she promises me for 'believing a lie.'"

The book consists of nearly five hundred pages, and it is difficult to see how it could have been abridged. We venture to say that we think its size and, alas, its price (though it is worth the money!) will militate against its widespread use by the kind of people the author and the late Sir William Robertson Nicoll had in mind. Would it be too much for a sympathetic and appreciative reviewer to suggest that some of the lectures in the book might be printed in pamphlet form and sold separately? The book itself would be improved by a bibliography. Here and there the author, who usually explains and defines his terms and references, fails a reader unfamiliar with Roman documents and leaves him, for example, wondering what the *Catechismo* is, who publishes it, and where it can be seen!

This volume ought to remain a standard work on its subject for many years to come. It will be a very great pity if the war causes it to be overlooked and unread by the clergy and ministers who rejoice in

the name "Evangelical." It is the kind of book which a wealthy warden, for example, might present to his vicar or to the new curate, whose sermons are deficient in the historical sense.

A. W. PARSONS.

BEGIN NOW

A letter from the Archbishop of York. (S.C.M.) 3d.

In this pamphlet Dr. Temple is primarily addressing Dr. Oldham, as editor of the *Christian News Letter*, which, as the Archbishop observes, has secured over 10,000 subscribers. In that publication the editor and others have analysed the present world situation. The Archbishop of York feels that we do not need much more analysis: "We need two things: a gathering together of the great mass of Christian sentiment which undoubtedly exists, and the direction of this towards some definite goal." This goal, Dr. Temple expresses in the words: "We must work for the end of international anarchy, and the establishment of international law, made and upheld by an international authority. In other words," and here the Archbishop seems to relapse into indefiniteness: "one form or another of Federalism must be our goal." Dr. Temple does not believe, however, that "a federal system can of itself secure justice or even abolish war, unless the economic life of men is ordered on principles more expressive of fellowship than at present."

The pamphlet closes with a statement drawn up at a group consisting of Anglicans, Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, and Friends, and had the assent of them all. It is headed *Doom, Deliverance, Unity*. From the premise, God reigns, the statement proceeds to recognize our present troubles as a just doom, acknowledges Christ as Lord and Deliverer and affirms a fellowship in Him which is unbroken by any earthly division and persists beneath even the wraths of war.

Multitudes of Christians would admit these propositions but the difficulty is to see how they may be made to work. All the problems of the better order are problems of the better man, and "the soul of all improvement is the improvement of the soul." The great difficulty seems to be that the Federal system internationally cannot function as a Christian thing any more than the League of Nations did. Would it be wiser for the Churches to push on with Missionary Work and so increase the number of the people in whose heart He reigns—"extending His rule by the energy of His love constraining them"? That seems to be the Master's way. Why is it not ours? What might not happen if we made it ours?

A. W. PARSONS.

PRAYERS OF CITIZENSHIP

By Kenneth Henderson. (Longmans Green.) 3s. 6d.

The author is a working journalist and also an Anglican parson—a combination which evidently works in Australia, as it did in the primitive Church when even the Archbishop made tents. The author has wanted to "fashion prayers out of the concrete situations in which

we serve and live." Excellent. He is convinced that "Christian worship is becoming a foreign language," because of the absorption of men in their immediate anxieties. Christian worship must accompany them into those problems. So he gives us prayers for old age, middle age, youth, work, democracy, students, doctors, nurses, farmers, soldiers, marriage.

It would be ungenerous to criticize these prayers harshly because Mr. Henderson himself is as conscious as anyone who attempted to make a prayer of how difficult it is. When you try to be particular, as he does, you are caught by the difficulty that particular objects are usually prayed for extemporally and seem somewhat strange when written. These prayers are written by a liberal Churchman and so lack the gospel promises which evangelicals know to be the essence of prayer. What is prayer without our Lord Jesus Christ as Author and Finisher? It is interesting that the prayers are made with "the help of poets" in order to retain dignity, to make "the language belong to the situation," "to keep the words within the margin of sincerity." (Certainly the twenty pages about the Situation, Prayer, War, and written by the journalist are as valuable as the sixty pages of prayers written by the parson.) The prayers (except the one for "friends departed") will anyhow be suggestive. But besides the sixty pages of prayers written by this parson-journalist there are interspersed twenty pages of excellent comment by this journalist-parson on such subjects as the Situation; Prayer in War-time; the Regeneration of Democracy, etc. In each there is something worth the price of the book: for example, "Prayer is the Acceptance of the Not-Yet, the quest of a power not now in things as they are."

THE CHURCH IN GERMANY IN PRAYER

Translated by Walter Kagerag and R. A. S. Martineau. Foreword by the Archbishop of York. (Mowbray & Co.) 2s. 6d.

In the book reviewed above Mr. Henderson says, "Prayer is the way to Reality, and the way to Reality lies through Realism." Our brothers in Christ who breathed, or rather cried out, these prayers were enduring the fire of persecution and suffering. They are the cry of Jonah in "the belly of hell"; the outburst of Paul in the prison. They achieve what Henderson aspires after. The prayers are short; they use Scripture; they analyse the need of the Spirit; they are the Psalms rewritten with New Testament light.

VISION, WORK, SERVICE

Compiled and written by Reginald Wilde. (George Allen & Unwin.) 3s. 6d.

Two pages of meditation and prayer for every day of the month. There is a good deal of Scripture, poetry, thinking aloud and prayer for myself and the people of this everyday world. A book that has taken great labour to compile. Much to commend but little understanding of the work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Here are three books of Prayer. Then Pray, and again I say, Pray.

A. B. B.