

Book Reviews

THE HUGUENOTS.

By Otto Zoff. London : George Allen and Unwin. 16/- net.

It is now over a century since Mr. E. Smedley's valuable and detailed three volume history in English of the Huguenots was published, and many other full and useful records of their amazing and fascinating struggle for liberty can be read in more general Histories of the Reformation like Wylie's, and Lindsay's, as well as the more recent scholarly accounts given in the Cambridge Modern History. But most of these are now out of print and therefore this handy comprehensive single volume story is very opportune.

The *dramatis personae* in the long drawn out tragedy are most clearly and realistically delineated, and the story is vividly told throughout. In the barbarous treatment of the Huguenots we are reminded of the present Nazi campaign of extermination of the innocent and defenceless Czechs and Poles, and both fully justify Bishop Joseph Hall's assertion that "man, if left to himself, is half a devil and half a beast." From one aspect, the Huguenot struggle was largely a faction political fight between the Bourbons and the Guises for the Court favour which the Bourbons were denied; but the Reformed Faith was its "occasion" and its driving force. Our author brings out clearly the close interaction of the political and religious forces as well as the excessive power and privileges of the Church and the rising spirit of the depressed bourgeois and defrauded Bourbons who naturally espoused the Reformed cause. He also notices the important part played in the struggle by the rise of an individualistic democratic movement against despotism and he well emphasises the fact that the Reformation was not merely a revolt against medieval Catholic doctrine, but was also a social and political struggle for civil liberty. Mr. Zoff refers graphically to the awful barbarities committed in this unnatural religious War, as "Hell returned to earth in the name of Heaven"; and he records the unchristlike jubilation of the Pope over the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. We may be thankful that a common peril through the fierce pagan assault on the Christian Faith itself is now dictating a more friendly and tolerant attitude by Rome to other Christians in many European countries, notably in our own. But we do well to remember that the basic principle of the persecution of 'heresy' has never been repented of or repudiated. "Freedom of worship" in the "Atlantic Charter" is strongly opposed by many Romanists in America, while its practical abrogation to-day in Spain is clear evidence of the relentless enforcement of this principle where political expediency can be disregarded. The ghastly records of the attempted pagan extermination of Christians and Jews in the early centuries or to-day are at least understandable, but the appalling examples of inhuman persecution of fellow Christians given in this tragic story are an eternal shame and disgrace to the professing followers of Him who declared "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples if ye love one another." The world will never be won for Christ until this spirit of anti-Christ is finally exorcised.

Mr. Zoff has given us a discerning and discriminating picture of the constantly changing aims and conflicting ideals of the protagonists in this long War of attrition. When we recall that it took 70 years of cruel persecution and 35 years of brutal and disastrous Civil War and the loss of 2,000,000 lives to secure only a fitful, partial and uncertain religious freedom in France for about 75 years, we need not be surprised if it takes over four years of carnage and awful suffering to enable a "new World" to enjoy the "Four Freedoms." This marvellous record of the supreme faith and endurance of the Huguenots makes, therefore, specially inspiring reading to-day—"Our fathers have declared unto us the noble works. . . ." "O Lord, arise, help us, and deliver us for thine honour."

It is interesting to be reminded of the large numbers of Huguenot refugees who emigrated to the British American Colonies in the 17th and 18th centuries so that there are now a million Americans of Huguenot ancestry. Incidentally, it will come like startling "new history" to many to learn that the present New York was originally founded in 1623, not by the Dutch, but by a small party of exiled French Huguenots from Holland. This instructive and attractively written epic struggle for freedom and truth, based on the most recent research, deserves to find a wide circle of readers. C.S.C.

VERNON FAITHFULL STORR.

A Memoir by G. H. Harris. S.P.C.K. 7/6.

The present reviewer was recently reading Mr. Ellis Roberts' *Life of Dick Sheppard*. There could hardly be a greater contrast in subject and treatment between the lives of two contemporary London clergymen. Storr was no stormy petrel, but a typical "Church of England man"; though as little fond of ecclesiastical organisation as Sheppard, he was much in the counsels of Randall Davidson, to whom he was an examining chaplain for thirty-four years. Between his public and private life there was "no dissociation," in his biographer's phrase. There is no need here to assume a divided personality, nor is it in Mr. Harris' manner to put thoughts into the mouth of his subject. He tells an unvarnished tale plainly, but those who knew Canon Storr will not like the story the less for that. To those who knew neither the man nor his work, this book cannot be expected to make much appeal.

Storr was baptised in India in 1869 by a pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church, and the chance event was prophetic of the broad outlook which was always his. At Clifton his headmaster was J. M. Wilson whose evangelicalism was markedly liberal for its day. It is permissible to wonder whether it was not Canon Wilson, who, before he came to Clifton had taught science at Rugby, who planted in Storr that interest in science, particularly in evolution, which the memoir first notes in his Oxford days, when he took up the subject after his degree and, on Gore's recommendation, became a reviewer of books on this subject for *The Guardian*. The only really substantial book that Storr himself published, *The Development of English Theology in the Nineteenth Century*, reflects his interest in the evolution of theology, and the influence of natural science upon it. We remember a sermon at St. Martin's about 1924 in which Storr urged that man's ideas of God must grow with the expansion of other knowledge. Looking over his life as a whole, now it is possible to see how typical the sermon was of the man's intellectual outlook. His was always a questing spirit, and the youthfulness of manner which marked his maturity was the index of a freshness and zest of mind ever interested in new things. Such an outlook marked a difference from the older evangelicalism. In a letter written about the time he began to teach philosophy at Oxford, he writes :

"It is very funny how the High Church party is angling to catch me—how Chavasse (*i.e.*, the future Bishop of Liverpool) and Rice wish to keep me . . . And I? I want to preserve strict independence."

Storr did retain his independence. He was never a party man. And yet he found his life work, for the sake of which he steadfastly refused to leave his canonry of Westminster for the bench, in the Anglican Evangelical Group Movement. He did not find it, but, as its previous members admit, it took new life from contact with Storr. In fact, he found it an instrument to his hand for the work to which he gave his best gifts, the liberalising of the evangelical portion of the Church of England, the attempt to show that the new knowledge whether it came through biology or through Biblical criticism was not destructive of the essential Christian truths. Another quotation of about the same time as the former makes clear Storr's position, which remained much the same always.

"I think reason is the greatest friend of faith. . . . —wants to keep religion apart from everything else, as a system of practical conduct. I want to unify it with the growing truth on every side, and being of intellectual tastes myself, I am very interested in the intellectual aspects of religion. I regard the search for truth as a sacred duty, a very essential part of religion. . . . The point is to make all truth religious by bringing it, with P. Brooks, into the light of the idea of God."

Storr's liberal evangelicalism found expression at the annual conventions at Cromer where those who heard him, think that he reached his fullest stature, in educational lectures up and down the country, and in a number of smallish books. In the fifth chapter of this memoir entitled 'Christian and Churchman' Mr. Harris allows Storr to speak largely for himself; but he also draws attention to the primacy of the Bible in his teaching, more particularly in the work for the celebration of the fourth centenary of the setting up of the open Bible in our churches :

"He carefully diagnosed the various causes (which had made the Bible a mere household relic in the majority of homes) and deliberately set himself to restore the Bible in actual fact to that central position in the polity of the English

Church which it has ever held in theory."

There was little that was negative or deliberately controversial in Storr's work, but those who talked with him know how strongly he disapproved of some Roman teaching given by Anglo-Catholics, particularly with reference to the reserved sacrament :

"He knew that no apology was needed for the inescapable protestantism of the English Church regarding the Roman Catholic standpoint," and it is in line with this that Storr was not hopeful of the possibilities of reunion with Rome. He looked rather towards reunion with other Protestant churches, and to intercommunion as a means and not only as a goal.

But the final memory of Storr for all who came at all in contact with him must be of the man himself. He never sank the man in the calling. Something is said in the memoir of his helpfulness to the ordinands at Canterbury and Lambeth. A personal memory will remain of his last days in Oxford in July, 1940, three months before his death. As we walked back towards Lady Margaret Hall after tea, he let fall no word of the exhaustion which was overtaking him, but spoke of the need of the friendship relation between parents and children if they were to retain the confidence of their children. A member of the Abbey staff testifies to his "never failing charm of manner to us all." The white tie, in which some may best remember him, gives us that slightly old-fashioned flavour of an English gentleman in holy orders. That Storr most emphatically was, but more than that, one in the true tradition of George Herbert, a great Christian gentleman.

RALPH E. C. HOUGHTON.

BUNYAN CALLING : A VOICE FROM THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

By M. P. Willcocks. Pp. 236. London : George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1943. 12/6.

Studies of the life and work of John Bunyan have been many and varied in character. There have been some excellent literary appreciations, and many devotional expositions of his major writings. While most of his works are no longer read, some outstanding ones will be perused as long as the English language lasts. No one can have any pretensions to education who remains unacquainted with his *Pilgrim's Progress*; and his *Holy War* still stirs wonderfully the hearts of those who read it.

The work before us is of a very unusual kind. It is certainly not to be regarded as a devotional introduction, nor is it a mere study in literature. It is rather an attempt to give a psychological appreciation of the personality and character of a man who has profoundly influenced the lives of tens of thousands during the past two hundred and fifty years.

Miss Willcocks, who in her early days was a most successful teacher of history, has given us a series of novels and biographical works with a flavour all their own. We were therefore not unprepared to find real literary value in *Bunyan Calling*, and we have not been disappointed.

The task which she has set herself has been that of portraying the historical background of Bunyan's life. She traces his career, not with the precision of the practised biographer, but rather with the looser method of giving pictorial glimpses of scenes and events in which he was involved directly or indirectly.

In each of these she endeavours to make clear what, in her judgment, was the effect upon his mind and life.

This is all extremely interesting, but it suggests a question which we are inclined to ask, and that is as to whether a reconstruction of the career of a historical character of three centuries ago is really best done as an exercise in psychology, particularly when it is accomplished in the spirit of Freud and his disciples. Speaking for ourselves we feel that the more sober, though less exciting, literary approach would give us a truer understanding of the man in the times in which he lived. For whatever the results of such psycho-analytical treatment may be, everyone must recognise that in Bunyan's case his message and influence have moved multitudes who were completely ignorant of modern psychology.

Bunyan Calling, nevertheless, is a fascinating study in its own sphere, and we can recommend it to all who are able to read with discrimination.

D. TAYLOR WILSON.

DIVINE PROVIDENCE AND HUMAN DESTINY

By L. E. Elliott-Binns, D.D. S.P.C.K. 4/- net.

There is no question that the cataclysmic events of our time have thrust more prominently before men's thoughts than that of human destiny. Whither go

we? What is the goal of the long and troubled history of humanity? Is there any purpose discernible in its course, any "one divine event," far-off or near, "to which the whole creation moves"? Is there any Guiding Hand in control, any Providence that "shapes our ends, rough hew them how we will"? To many, humanity seems rather like a ship-wrecked company adrift on a shoreless sea than a great caravan that has struck its tents and marches hopefully and purposefully through the desert to the City of God.

It is then, at an opportune moment that Dr. Elliott-Binns has addressed himself to this subject. He has given his answer in a slender volume of 86 pages. It is a most readable and helpful book, packed with relevant and stimulating thoughts, drawn not only from his own long pondering on this theme but also from a wide range of writers and thinkers both ancient and modern. In so brief a space it is inevitable that he should give us rather a rapid and broad survey than a close investigation, but his choice of material and his shrewd comments upon it provide a book well worth our attentive reading.

First, Dr. Elliott-Binns turns to the Bible, shewing how "throughout the whole Bible, linking together its several parts, there runs the thread of a divine purpose" (p. 14). He lays special emphasis on the importance of the period between the Testaments, and, if it be thought that he touches somewhat lightly on N.T. Teaching, he is careful to lead us to its climax in the revelation of God in the words of 1 John iv. 8, 16, "God is love," and all that implies.

The study of the Bible is in itself a questioning of history: but in the second section of his book, Dr. Elliott-Binns turns to history in the wider sense, and to the opinions of historians as to its meaning. "Civilization and culture," wrote Emil Brunner, "are, so to speak, the finger-prints and foot-prints of historical man." Historians and philosophers have examined these with immense care and research. Many have come to sceptical and pessimistic views, and ideas of the government of human affairs by Fate or Church or in "cosmic cycles," have had, and still have, widespread prevalence. It is well to have these set clearly side by side with that Philosophy of History developed in St. Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*, and in many later Christian writers, and which was already inherent in Pauline Christology. Science also has its illumination. Our author summarizes his conclusions thus: "Revelation has taught us that God is a God of love; from science we have testimony to His power and wisdom: the contribution of history, in the narrower sense, is to emphasize His justice" (p. 53).

For the more constructive part of the book we naturally turn to the last chapter entitled "Co-operation with Providence," a chapter that should be carefully read and pondered. Here we find many wise and challenging statements and comments under the headings: The Conditions of Co-operation, the Work of the Church, and the Work of the Individual. It is, for instance, a salutary mental and spiritual exercise to examine an assertion such as this, "Our boasted Western civilization . . . is in many ways, farther from a true Christian order of life, than, let us say, a primitive African community where natural bonds and relationships are still valued." With the plea for a revival of spiritual life in the Church we should all have deep sympathy. It is the burden of our longing and our prayers. Nor can we find any words that more aptly and briefly express our personal faith in Divine Providence and our own human destiny than those of St. Augustine with which Dr. Elliott-Binns has chosen to bring his stimulating and interesting book to a close. "For what other thing is our end but to come to that Kingdom of which there is no end?" S. NOWELL-ROSTRON.

UNITED BIBLE STUDY

Edited by the Rev. A. M. Stibbs, M.A. The Inter-Varsity Fellowship.
1/6.

A useful collection of nine studies for Bible Study Circles forms the second volume in the series published by the I.V.F. Its issue follows an encouraging reception given to the earlier set, which was edited by the late Rev. H. E. Guillebaud. The present book comes from the capable hands of the Rev. A. M. Stibbs and a group of seven other writers. A general introduction, setting forth the aims and requisites of Bible study, together with practical suggestions for the conduct of study circles, is followed by nine courses of eight studies each, designed to serve for three full terms in each of three University years. This of itself, will convey some idea of the abundance of material which is embodied within the comparatively small and packed space of the book.

In the Preface, the Rev. G. T. Manley explains that these courses are purposely varied in the hope that they may be useful to groups differing in size and character. From the Old Testament, we have the Life of Abraham, some selected Psalms, and the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah: from the New, the Sermon on the Mount and the Epistle of St. James (taken together), 1 Corinthians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians together, and 1 and 2 Timothy together. The other two subjects are "Christ the Teacher" and "The Holy Spirit and the Christian." Each of the studies is opened by a brief introduction, and the number of questions is sufficient to provide ample scope for selection and for any concentration that may be felt desirable. There are abundant references, and occasional suggestive notes. It is a book which should be widely demanded and profitably used. Bible students who are isolated from any possibility of joining a study circle would find much suggestion from a personal and individual use of the material provided. W.S.H.

THE POLICY OF NEUTRALITY AND THE PRACTICAL ALTERNATIVE

By A. J. Jacobs. *Cape Times, Ltd.*

In a well-reasoned and exhaustive book, the author examines the attitude of neutrality adopted by some nations during recent times, and presents his conclusions that neutrality has largely been responsible for most of the acts of aggression which have been perpetrated in recent history, boldly claiming that more than anything else, it is accountable for the survival of warfare. His outlook upon the future is not that of the "blind-eye" pacifism which marked the years before the outbreak of this present war. The contention of our author is that as "it is the fundamental condition of human society that members share the duty of protecting each other from violence" (p. 93), so must collective protection be "an indispensable condition for the peaceful adjustment of the conflicting interests of those greater organised aggregations of individuals which make up the world community of nations" (p. 70). Towards the end of the book the author examines his thesis in the light of Holy Scripture with reverence and with conviction. Altogether, it is a book dealing with a thorny problem from a new angle, and deserves careful study. E.H.

A JUST AND DURABLE PEACE. A DISCUSSION BY LEADERS OF THE AMERICAN CHURCHES

S.C.M. 2/6.

Every important newspaper on both sides of the Atlantic is now stressing the importance of a clear and definite understanding between Great Britain and America in regard both to the conduct of the war and the settlement of the Peace. It is equally important that the leaders of Christian thought and opinion should have a clear-cut policy on the religious and moral problems involved in this settlement. Those of us who have been in America and mixed amongst the people and sampled the newspapers know that a common language does not necessarily imply exactly the same ideas of social and political righteousness. In his introduction to this book, Dr. William Paton emphasizes the fact that for Christian people there is a way to a real understanding in an open, frank and honest sharing of ideas. It is now difficult to find opportunities of personal contact but in this book we have the opportunity of hearing what fourteen well-known American publicists are saying to their own countrymen. It is not a book consisting of polite and diplomatic utterances but is mainly some plain speaking from Americans to their own kith and kin. All the writers are concerned with the religious aspects of post-war problems and it is encouraging to discover that on both sides of the Atlantic almost the same fundamental principles of action dominate our thinking.

It is not possible in the limited space available for this review to deal in detail with the arguments and conclusions of the thoroughly excellent articles in the book. English Churchmen will be thankful for the predominant place which is given to the utterances, on various occasions, of the Archbishop of Canterbury: e.g., Henry P. Van Dusen, Professor of Systematic Theology, Union Theological Seminary, bases his contribution in the book, on Dr. Temple's Enthronement Sermon on St. George's Day, 1942. There can be no doubt, as Canon Raven puts it, that "a new page in history began on the day when Dr. Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury, was seen to run across London Bridge to catch a 'bus!' " Moreover, for the first time in the Church of England a book written by a Free Churchman was recommended by the Archbishop to his clergy for study in Lent, 1943.

The following subjects are dealt with in detail—The necessity of a Righteous Faith, The urgency of the Church's Spiritual task, The need for co-operation with other Faiths, The permanent character of Moral Principles, Peace Terms must not be a vehicle for Vengeance, Welfare of human beings rather than the Power and Prestige of States, Durable Peace will not be achieved by military victory or treaty, General Statement on the Guiding Principles of a Righteous Peace.

J. W. AUGUR.

SOREN KIERKEGAARD. THE PROPHET OF THE ABSOLUTE.

AN INTERPRETATIVE STUDY.

By The Rev. H. V. Martin, M.A., B.D. The Christian Literature Society for India. 75pp. 1/3.

The Christian Literature Society for India is performing an inestimable service to the evangelical world by the production of scholarly works in the field of dogmatics. This interpretative study by the Rev. H. V. Martin of the theological contribution made by Kierkegaard is a valuable addition to the series. It is difficult to praise this splendid little introduction too highly. The author's lucidity of style and clarity of grasp make his work a stimulating guide to the literature of the greatest of Danish writers.

Evangelicals will do well to acquaint themselves with Kierkegaard's contribution to theology and philosophy. His influence is steadily growing, despite the notorious insularity of English theological thought. One writer has declared that Kierkegaard "is striding into his own in seven-leagued boots" (quoted, p. 60). Bishop Stephen Neill justly remarks in the Foreword that "it is very remarkable that a Dane, who died in 1885, and for seventy years after his death was almost forgotten and almost completely unknown in England, should have become one of the chief influences in the development of modern theological thought" (p.v.). It may safely be averred that there is no comparable compact work in English which will reveal the reason for this better than Mr. Martin's introductory study.

A quotation, culled almost at random, will illustrate the quality of this work :

"The 19th century theology as a whole stressed the continuity of the human and the Divine, either in the sphere of reason, experience or thought, whereby the relationship of man to God was considered unbroken even though marred by sin. It was largely a theology of Divine Immanence, where the paradoxical relationship of time and eternity was slurred over. The new movement of the last quarter of a century has swung across to a theology of transcendence, qualified however by the conception of the decisive contact of time and eternity in Jesus Christ, and in the Kingdom of God eschatologically conceived. Eternity is not time endlessly prolonged but a category infinitely and qualitatively different ; in the same way, God is not a large and improved edition of man but also infinitely and qualitatively different." (pp. 63-4).

It is surprising, however, that Mr. Martin classifies Kierkegaard as a "prophet", describing him as "the accusing angel of contemporary Christianity, and thus in true line with the prophets and reformers of the Christian Church" (p.53). On the next page it is asserted that he "must be ranked with the true prophets, and like every true prophet before him, he was despised and rejected by his own people." There is, admittedly, a popular use of the term "prophet." But its application to Kierkegaard is singularly unfortunate. One of Kierkegaard's smaller studies was entitled, "On the Distinction between a Genius and an Apostle." Kierkegaard stressed that the distinction was not a mere human difference : a genius was an exceptional human being, possessing great ability ; an apostle was a human being, subject to human passions and sins, and yet chosen of God, apart from any human ability or deserving, as a vessel to bear the word of God. A prophet is in the same category as an apostle, a human being elected and called of God for some specific work. Apart from the fact that Kierkegaard spoke "without authority" (to use his own phrase), he would have been the first to repudiate a title which implies divine calling and ordination.

It is to be hoped that in the next edition several minor emendations will be made : on p. 33 "so" appears for "to" ; on p. 56 "quite" for "quiet" and "developement" for "development" ; on pp. 57, 67 and 68, "practise" for "practice" ; while on p. 64 "oppositites" is twice printed for "opposites."

S.B.B

EVERYBODY'S PRAYER

By W. H. Murray Walton. (Lutterworth Press, 3/6).

THE ORIGIN AND MEANING OF THE LORD'S TEACHING ON PRAYER

By J. O. F. Murray. (The Central Readers' Board Office, 6d.).

The contents of Mr. Murray Walton's small book on the Lord's Prayer first appeared in the monthly organ of the Newspaper Evangelistic Campaign in Japan, hence the illustrations drawn from Japanese sources.

It is a devotional study, full of practical application. It contains material suitable for the Bible Class leader. The preacher will find its chapters suggestive and helpful. It is a book that will stimulate prayer.

After a discussion on the background and origin of Everybody's Prayer there are chapters on the God to Whom we Pray, the petitions which make up the prayer and a meditation on the word "Amen." The Social Implications of Christianity" is an earnest plea for "the redemption of Society."

Is it a fact that no Old Testament worthy addressed God as "our Father" (p. 32)? What of David (1 Chron. 29. 10) and Isaiah (64. 8), not to mention other references?

The author asks (p. 24) whether the Roman priest repeating his set offices, and the Anglican clergyman, who says "Matins and Evensong" in solitude, necessarily approximate to the mind of Jesus Christ in the matter of private prayer.

The book concludes with a Litany, based on the Lord's Prayer, by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The booklet by Canon J. O. F. Murray is a thoughtful commentary on the phrases of the Lord's Prayer.

The author believes the prayer enshrines the human experience of the Eternal Son of God, and makes the fruits of His experience available, not only for the immediate circle of His disciples, but also for all men everywhere, to the end of time.

H.N.S.

CRUDEN'S CONCORDANCE

Lutterworth Press. 10/6.

The Lutterworth Press are to be warmly congratulated and thanked for their enterprise in bringing out a New and Revised Edition of the above valuable preacher's help. Several notable improvements are introduced, e.g. the grouping of Proper Names as an appendix is most helpful, especially as this includes some of the lesser known names not usually found in a Concordance.

Scholars on both sides of the Atlantic have co-operated in its production we are told, and Bible students will welcome the fruit of their joint labours. The price (10/6) for these days of a volume of 800 pages of such closely condensed matter is remarkably cheap and can only have been based upon the anticipation of very considerable sales, which the production certainly justifies. T.A.

"LESSONS OF THE PRINCE OF PEACE"

By Canon Raven. (Longmans, 2/6.)

Canon Raven's "Lessons of the Prince of Peace" is a short book. I am glad of that because I believe Dr. Raven has a great "following" of ordinary people, those we like to call "the men in the street" who are not able to read long Theological works, but are ready, because of their keenness on Christian matters—and some I believe because they came in personal contact with Dr. Raven when he worked in the North—to read learned books.

Here is a book in shortness and price to suit all!

Dr. Raven stresses the point that now is the time to face up to the realities and implications of the Christian message. It is wrong to imagine that our big effort must be only getting on with munitions. But the biggest job, and the most vital, is facing up to the challenge of the Gospel, and working out its message and teaching for this day and the days to come.

Even in the stress of war-days the Christian must not act as if Christ and His message can take second place. There can only be one place, and that the first place in our lives.

I am not sure that I agree with the way the writer seems to approach the problem of sin, I believe one great need to-day is to emphasise the sinfulness of sin.

I do, however, agree that it is imperative that we lay greater emphasis on the positive aspect of our Faith, and to present God.

It is an excellent book and well worth careful reading.

J.T.

REAL LIFE IS MEETING

By J. H. Oldham. *Christian News-Letter Books, No. 14. Sheldon Press 1/6.*

Here are five of the supplements written for the Christian News-letter during 1942, together with one by Professor Hodges of Reading University, and another by Mr. Philip Mairet, Editor of the New English Weekly.

The subjects discussed are much to the fore just now. "Superman, or Son of God?" "The Gospel Drama and Society" and "A Fresh Approach to Christian Education" are specially relevant and their treatment here, as we may expect, is fresh and stimulating.

Dr. Oldham pleads for a Christian understanding of the present predicaments of society. He is a forthright critic of the individualism which he thinks has marked the life and thought of the epoch closed by the war. He urges co-operation between Christian and non-Christian in matters fundamental to both. Man's true life is realized only in a community.

Definitely a book to read and discuss.

H.N.S.

LAW WITH LIBERTY

By Geoffrey Allen. *S.C.M. Press, 5/-.*

Mr. Allen returned to this country from China in the autumn of 1940. He therefore has first-hand knowledge of the upheavals war has caused to two types of civilization.

His book, full of concentrated thought, deals with the social and religious problems of to-day and to-morrow, and covers a wide range of subjects.

The author sees a pattern of development in the present convulsion, and fore-shadows the shape of things to come. He believes that individualism, with its weaknesses, will be abandoned. In politics, the goal for man is state planning, plus individual freedom; in economics, the goal is state socialism, with a modified retention of private property. As to the Church, Mr. Allen looks hopefully towards the Oecumenical movement, and a synthesis of the "Catholic and Protestant traditions." In this, he sees part of "a world movement of the Spirit, which is affecting every level of human life in the present time."

Readers of this journal will find much to criticise in this challenging book. It contains an analytical chart of the matters discussed.

H.N.S.

THE EVANGELICAL QUARTERLY. (Jan. 1943).

This number provides a varied selection of topics, which greatly contributes to its interest. Mr. F. F. Bruce, Lecturer in Greek at Leeds University explores the probable Aramaic background to much of the Gospel narratives. He deals with the Semitic influence on the Koine of the New Testament, distinguishing between the Hebrew and the Aramaic "Semitisms," and advances to the consideration of the amount of evidence for Aramaic documents underlying the final Greek forms. Prof. C. C. Torrey's massive contribution is here taken into account, though Mr. Bruce believes that the evidence in his works, while not having received the acceptance that they deserve, nevertheless would be satisfied by a theory that assumes that the sources rather than the complete Gospels were originally composed in Aramaic. The establishment of the view that the sources were written and not oral Aramaic, is by the examination of Greek expressions which may show a misreading of Aramaic originals while a reconstruction of the original phrase (not always a certainty) helps to explain some exegetical problems. Dr. Burney's well-known work on the *Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel* is used here. The essay gives strong confirmation to the view that this investigation will lead to a clearer understanding of the Gospel narratives, by securing what were the *ipsissima verba* when confronted with variants between two Gospels, and might assist in settling some literary problems (*e.g.*, the connexion between John the Apostle and John the Presbyter). Prof. D. M. Baillie of St. Andrew's faces some well-known challenging questions on Infant Baptism—If the benefits of a Sacrament are inseparably connected with faith why do we baptise infants?—What happens spiritually when an infant is baptised?—What is the difference between an infant who has been baptised and one that has not? He replies by the question Are children part of the Church or not? and shows the important consequences of the answer, one way or the other. There are some valuable comments on the solidarity of each Christian family as an offset to modern individualism, and the strong support of the Old Testament analogy of circumcision. In answer to the third question there is the point of introduction to a new environment which ministers blessing. A valuable

illustration is given of the need of love to an unconscious infant expressed by the physical means of loving hands, without which no amount of good feeding, etc., will prevent some from pining and death. The Professor holds strongly that similarly the grace of God does not await the intelligent apprehension before it works within. Finally, the fact of the later influence of that early rite is pointed out, its call to look back to the vow then made, and to apprehend the promise then made with adult faith.

An analysis of the Christian ground of Re-union is made by the Rev. R. G. Smith in "The Church and the Churches." The whole argument is along strong Barthian lines. History as a court of appeal is eschewed and theology, in fact the doctrine of the Church, is taken as the sole subject on which the matter depends. Naturally the view of the Church as an extension of the Incarnation is replaced by a dialectical, twofold relation of the Church to Christ, the Word. In humble recognition of His scrutiny, of defection and need for Reform, all churches must await the leading of the Holy Ghost as to the appropriate course of action.

The Rev. J. B. Hornsby gives an interesting account of the life of James Allen of Gayle, which throws light on little known parts of Scottish non-conformist history.

A review of Soren Kierkegaard's 'Unscientific Postscript' completes a very instructive number.

THE BIBLE : ITS CONTENTS AND MESSAGE.

By Archdeacon W. S. Moule. Church Book Room. 1/6.

This little book, well described by its title, is a *multum in parvo*, and supplies a real need, namely that of a brief but scholarly conspectus of the books of the Bible and their contents.

From Genesis to Revelation these are dealt with in turn, with enough of introduction to instruct, and enough indication of the contents and message to stimulate and guide intelligent reading. There is not an obscure sentence nor a wasted word.

The print and make-up are excellent, in contrast with so many war-time books. The treatment is fresh and scholarly, without ever being fanciful or difficult. We may quote as an example the twofold description of the contents of the Acts of the Apostles as containing (1) eleven things which Jesus Christ did from heaven, and (2) seven things which the Holy Spirit did in the church, closing with the sentence, "The Book of Acts tells what the Holy Spirit *did* by the Apostles. The Epistles, which follow in our Bibles, tell us what He *taught* by the Apostles."

The author is a believer in the full inspiration of Holy Scripture, the truth and divine origin of which is assumed throughout.

It is just the book to give to Sunday School Teachers, Confirmees, Crusaders or any whose Bible Reading it is desired to encourage.

We predict for it a ready sale and a wide sphere of usefulness.

G.T.M.

CHRISTIAN ADVANCE

By Hugh C. Warner. S.C.M. 2/-

The late G.K. Chesterton used to say : "If you want to make a thing living, make it local." The sub-title of the Vicar of Epsom's book is : "Ideas and Plans for Local Action." It is a militant book about social planning and post war reconstruction. It is from the pen of a man who was chaplain to Archbishop Temple at York from 1932-38. He was also secretary of the Central Youth Council of the Church of England from 1939 and Editor of *Youth in Action*. He writes on such matters as the Field for Combined (Christian) Operations ; Tactics and Strategy and the Layman's "Firing Party." There are many suggestions for Group Discussions with Young Wives (quite one of the best sections of the book) and also with Youth and Men. He believes in training the Leaders in the parishes. We agree with him. It is one of the most urgent and one of the most neglected of our tasks. There are, however, things in the book which strike an Evangelical strangely. For example, in a really valuable series of Youth Discussions we find a group headed : "The Hope of a Better World." We are told that in this series the subject moves a little from the specifically "religious" theme to the "social" and that this alternation of interest is a principle always to be observed in groups among young people. This, we think, is sound and good advice. But then follows : "*My Job : a money-making*