

## REVIEWS OF BOOKS.

## CHRISTIAN SOCIALISM.

CHRISTIAN SOCIALISM: 1848-1854. By the Rev. C. E. Raven, M.A., Fellow and Dean of Emmanuel College, Cambridge. London: Macmillan & Co. 17s. net.

The story of the beginnings of Christian Socialism is the story of a movement which, from the most modest start, has grown into a world-wide organization. So familiar has the title "Christian Socialism" become, that we are in danger of forgetting its origin. Yet it would be sheer ingratitude not to remember the enthusiasm, the struggle, the disappointments, and the high faith of the men to whom the inception of that great movement is ultimately due. Three or four of these pioneers stand out sharply on the field of history—Maurice, Ludlow, Kingsley, and Vansittart Neale. The present book, appreciative yet critical, full of information and carefully documented, fills a gap in the economic and social history of the times. Up to the present we have had to rely largely on such books as Kaufmann's and Sidney Webb's to enable us to form some sort of idea of the spade-work accomplished by Ludlow and his devoted band in the late 'forties and early 'fifties of the last century; and the well-known volume of Sidney Webb is so manifestly biassed that we can put no great faith in its criticisms or its conclusions. Mr. Raven has done his work with admirable tact, and deserves well at the hands of every competent student. Perhaps his Introduction (pp. 1-51) is the most important part of it; and readers who have no time or inclination to peruse the whole book, would be well advised to ponder these illuminating pages. Socialism, as we understand it, rests upon two: doctrines (1) the ultimate perfectibility of human nature; (2) collectivism and co-operation *versus* the old doctrine of competition. The Christian Socialists proper enthusiastically believed in (2); but they so far modified (1) as to lay stress upon the paramount need of importing the spirit of Christianity into human ethical ideas, in order to achieve the end aimed at. In this they were right. But we may not forget (as some of the pioneers seemed to forget) that a Christian ethic is impossible apart from Christian faith. Socialism without Christianity is, however we regard it, nothing but a man-made evangel, and is doomed to sterility in the long run. *True* Socialism (not that blend of somewhat incompatible doctrines known as Christian Socialism), as preached on the Continent and in England to-day, is deeply anti-Christian; but this fact is most carefully kept in the background by interested parties. Readers of Belfort Bax, who is nothing if not outspoken, know better. Possibly it is just because the early doctrinaires laid too little stress upon Christian faith that Socialism, in its present form, has allowed itself to become practically divorced from the Christian ethic that it ought to preach. Modern Socialists are more busy denouncing the *status quo*, and crying out against Capitalism, than in preaching a Christian gospel. It is true that, in the past, Christians have allied themselves with Capital; but this is no part of Christianity, but only an excrescence on the creed. Tyranny (as Herbert Spencer acutely prophesied) is of the nature of Socialism in its latter-day developments. True, both Christianity and Socialism preach "the Kingdom"; but whereas the former preaches the Kingdom of spiritual life and righteousness, the Socialists look for a millennium of material comfort.

All the furious tirades against Capitalism (inspired by the sinister teaching

of that violent and vindictive German-Jew, Karl Marx) indulged in to-day by our Bernard Shaws and Sidney Webbs, are overdone; collectivism is no final panacea for the hurt of the world. The pendulum has swung to an extreme. It isn't capitalism *qua* capitalism that is the enemy, but the inhuman use made of it. Modern Industrialism, not Individualism justly understood, is the bane of modern life: England was "merry England" before the Industrial era, and it might be so again if organized on a Christian (not on a merely money-making) basis. Socialism alone will not save the world; Christianity—applied to all life's complex problems—can.

The latter-day doctrine of the "perfectibility of human nature" is a dream. If the Gospel be true, that doctrine stands self-condemned; it is a doctrine of freaks, charlatans, and sentimentalist. What is needed is the iron of the Gospel to strengthen our moral natures and disabuse us of our fond hopes and our still fonder doubts.

We have read Mr. Raven's book from cover to cover, and can testify to its honesty of purpose and its high aims. We by no means agree with the author in all his views; but we are abundantly sure that what he has written is written for our instruction, and many a fine lesson can be learned from it.

#### AN INDIAN PHILOSOPHER ON RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY.

THE REIGN OF RELIGION IN CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHY. By S. Radhakrishnan. London: Macmillan & Co. 12s.

It is somehow strange to read a detailed criticism by an Indian, in perfect and lucid English, of European philosophical systems. We have been told again and again that the Indian mind is exceptionally subtle, and some of us have endeavoured with little profit to grasp the philosophical conceptions that regulate thought in India. As we read this volume, we felt ashamed of ourselves, for if Westerners do not succeed in getting clear ideas of the thought of the East through ignorance of terminology, Mr. Radhakrishnan has certainly grappled with our philosophical systems, and, what is more, he has discussed them with a mastery that merits the highest praise. Knowledge of God is for him, as for us, that part of thought which has most importance. It is that which gives to life its regulative directivity. If a man be as religious as he professes to be, then his knowledge of God will colour all his actions, and direct his attitude to every problem that comes before him. The pity of it is that we are so ready to compromise our highest knowledge, by permitting lower springs of thought and action to interfere with its course. Our author has no tolerance for this attitude. The one great fact of life for him is God, and he holds that the *Upanishads* give us the starting point in true philosophical development, which, after all, is to him only a commentary on the ideals to be found in these writings.

Practically all the chief systems of philosophy that are now current pass under extremely acute criticism. We find discussed Bergson and Eucken, Leibniz and William James, Professor Ward and Dean Rashdall. Not only does he criticize—he also expounds, and it is possible by reading his work to get more than a fair idea of the fundamental thought of the leaders of present-day thinking. His own standpoint is definite. He holds firmly by monistic idealism as opposed to pluralistic theism. He is convinced that philosophy leads to absolute idealism, and objects to any other conclusion. "The current pluralistic systems are the outcome of the interference of religious prejudices with the genuine spirit of speculation." Man, according to him, has taken the low road in his philosophical speculation, because he strives to find a place for his religion which is illegitimate in pure thought. If religion

be knowledge of a personal God, then a complete philosophy or pure speculation cannot be satisfied with the absolute as something impersonal and unknowable, for an impersonal absolute is so emptied of all content that it is a mere negation in spite of all the emphasis we may lay upon it and the high-sounding names we may give it. We are among those who believe that mere thinking will never reach more than conclusions that are so empty of content that they are valueless as directive forces. We have again and again observed that not only does religion, or God consciousness as a Person, intrude into thinking, but that by some subtlety mere empty judgements become value judgements, by importing into themselves a content when they have none. Abstract notions can do nothing, only when thought posits an object, and there is over against the proposition something to give it positive content, can we go from argument to argument. Even in mathematics there must be some relation between the reasoning and axioms or symbols, to enable us to reach definite results. Only when the results can be brought to the test of reality, can we be sure that they are true. But the reality in mathematics is one thing—ultimate reality is another thing. The natural dialectic of the soul does not carry us very far, although it may seem imposing in the hands of so sincere and able a thinker as our author. No one, however, who reads this volume can possibly rest satisfied with materialistic conceptions as a satisfactory explanation of man and his relation to the Universe. There is a place which can only be filled by mind, and we Christians find that Mind revealed by Christ as the Incarnate Son of God. In the struggle for supremacy between philosophy and religion, we do not find conflict but complementariness. There is no real opposition between the last word of philosophy and the deliverances of the Christian religious consciousness.

#### THE WOMAN'S MOVEMENT.

CHRIST AND THE WOMAN'S MOVEMENT. By the Rev. C. Broughton Thomas, Vicar of Little Aston. London: *Robert Scott*. 2s. net.

The Bishop of Lichfield contributes a Foreword commending the book and the writer. The author's contention is that women stand for the exaltation of life above property, and of persons above things. This being so, the Bishop thinks that "we may look with hope to the help that women will give in the solution of some of the most pressing problems in the building up of a new and better order. It is obvious enough that there are certain moral evils which women will not tolerate."

In his careful survey of the Old Testament, in which the author examines the ideals of the Prophets and of the Law, there is much that is good; but many will disagree with his critical position and will question his categorical statement that "the traditional view, that the Law, as a complete series of enactments, owed its origin to Moses, and existed prior to the time of the main body of the prophets, is very difficult to hold, and has, in fact, been almost unanimously abandoned by modern scholars."

The Second Section is headed "Christ"; and examines what Christ was; what Christ taught; what Christ stood for; what Christ is. These chapters lead on to the next section, "What Follows," and in this there are four sub-divisions. (a) *The Woman's Movement*.—Opposition to which rests upon just the same motives as that of the Pharisees to Christ; dislike of change and more or less unconscious selfishness. (b) *The Social System*.—The real cause of the antagonism of Labour against Capital is not so much a great desire for mere material advantage: it lies rather in the sense of personal degradation. The test of a rightly ordered industrial system must

always be the quality of the human beings produced, not the quantity of goods placed on the market. (c) *Education*.—The Woman's Movement has challenged the world with Christ's Ideal, and with it has won. (d) *International Relations*.—One great effect of the war has been to convince believers in democracy that they cannot ignore other nations; and the vital question that will determine the future welfare of the race is, How may we eliminate the distrust between nations, and replace it with fine confidence and mutual respect?

The closing chapter is entitled "The Church," which the writer defines as follows: The Church was the Voice of the Spirit proclaiming Christ in words that were the lives of men. After a very rapid and comprehensive survey of some of the salient facts and features of the Church's life through the centuries, the writer reaches an important fact, viz., that at the present time it seems to many that the Spirit is calling us to a fresh development of our ideals; and he boldly claims that "The Spirit must have women spokesmen as well as men."

This volume is a considered contribution to the study of a question of absorbing interest—and its price puts it within the reach of a wide circle of readers.

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#### SHORT NOTICES.

ALFRED MACLAREN AFTER THE WAR. By Leslie Bingham. London: *Elliot Stock*.

A strange story, the moral of which is not very obvious. Alfred Maclaren comes home wounded and persuades his brother to join up. This brother gets killed and Alfred is blamed for the advice he gave, and is for a time the scapegoat on account of a supposed breach of the moral law on the part of the dead man. Later on Alfred takes to writing, and his manuscripts are destroyed by an odd person, known as the Green Wizard, but he re-writes his book and does better. But enough—we are tempted to wish the Green Wizard had destroyed Mr. Bingham's MS. ! Then he might have either left novel-writing severely alone or done better. However, Alfred is quite an estimable young man who has some ideas about Christian unity.

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The S.P.C.K. magazine *Theology* cannot fail to appeal to all serious students of theology, for its articles are well written by competent writers. The numbers for October and November are extremely valuable on account of the long review by the Rev. J. K. Mozley of "Recent Work on the Atonement," in which he subjects to detailed analysis the many volumes published during recent years. His criticism of Dr. Rashdall is at once keen and convincing. Few of our readers will agree with much that Mr. Pass said on The Credentials of our Communion, but his concluding article is free from the main contentions that caused dissent in its predecessors. The Reviews of the Lambeth Conference by the Bishop of Zanzibar, Dr. Selbie, Dr. Mary Scharlieb and Miss McNeile are well worth reading, and no student can afford to miss Provost Bernard's masterly account of the Odes and Psalms of Solomon.

WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED. By Richard Aumerle Maher. London and New York: *The Macmillan Company*. 7s. 6d. net.

An attractively got up volume in which the story of the Annunciation and the Nativity is expanded in narrative form. Mr. Maher has a pleasing style and has, on the whole, accomplished very creditably what he set out to do. There are some effective decorations, and the book is most suitable as a Christmas gift-book for young people.