

BOOKS AND THEIR WRITERS.

I HAVE had the opportunity lately of looking over the bookshelves of a number of Evangelical clergymen in various parts of the country, and I have been struck by the fact that the great majority of new books, especially those calculated to help in the preparation of sermons, have been by ministers of one or other of the Free Churches. Why is this? Why are there not a number of the Evangelical clergy writing similar books? May it not be that the attention of our Evangelical leaders is at present being diverted from such subjects—their natural and more obvious interests—to the liturgiological problems raised by the discussion of Prayer Book revision in the Church Assembly? This is not a sphere in which Evangelical Churchmen are naturally at home. It draws them away from the great moral issues, and the great fundamental facts of the faith, which are after all their great concern. These are the subjects in which congregations require to be instructed, and it is a distinct loss that our younger Evangelical men of ability are not devoting themselves to the production of a first-class literature dealing with them.

While we express this regret we must also say that they are fortunate in having their needs so well supplied in books of this kind by men of scholarship, thought and spirituality among the Nonconformists. Half a dozen names come at once to mind as the authors of books that have inspired hosts of sermons. Foremost among them we place here the name of Dr. Robert F. Horton, the well-known Congregational minister of Hampstead. His latest book is *The Mystical Quest of Christ* (George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 10s. 6d. net). It will be found a treasure house of thought and suggestion by any preacher who is fortunate enough to be the possessor of it. It has a peculiar quality of its own. It is difficult to describe it. There is first of all the intense sense of reality and earnestness without which the most brilliant writing fails. Then there is the scholarly yet simple penetration into the heart of things that is characteristic of the great thinker. It is a book altogether on the supreme place of Christian values. Yet he does not put it in that way. He seeks out the Christian rule of life, the great

master principle—it is Christ-likeness. But this is not the asceticism of a Thomas à Kempis. The fundamental fact which constitutes Christ-likeness is that "He gave Himself without reserve and without cessation to the service of others."

We must fail to do justice to the volume because we have not space in which to show the many ways of applying the principle or of indicating the wealth of enriching illustration used to interpret it. A youth is choosing a calling, here is the primary opportunity of applying it, "For others" is the motto of the best life. It is the Master motive that can transform the Business World. M. Coué's well-known formula becomes in regard to it, "Day by day, in every way, Christ takes more complete possession of me." Applied to the Clerical profession it is a searching test. Self-seeking, self-indulgence, self-absorption fly before it. Fletcher of Madeley is drawn with sympathetic skill as an almost ideal representative. We cannot resist quoting a different phase—"Dr. Gott had written a book for the clergy, in which he discountenanced all co-operation with Nonconformists, but in the books recommended as essential were Dale's *Atonement* and his *Ephesians*." In the second part, "The Christian Decalogue," an even wider scope is given to the application of the principle. Ten rules are suggested, and they open out "a new vision of what Christianity means, and a new plan of putting it into execution." The titles of some of the chapters suggest the lines of thought—"Extending the Kingdom," "All Nations dear to God," "Forgiveness of Injuries," "The Esteem of the Poor." The third part is "The Method," and is of equal value with the other two. Here again the latest results of scientific and philosophical advance are pressed into Christian service. Auto-suggestion has its lessons for Christian practice. Meditation, Habituation, Association, are all applied to the same end. The true value of Mysticism is indicated, and in a comprehensive summary Christ is set forth as the one explanation of man's life on this planet, the world's one hope, and its only lasting joy. It is a volume of inspiring and refreshing essays, strengthening to faith, and stimulating to increased efforts in a victorious cause.

"The Living Church Series" (James Clarke & Co.), edited by Prof. J. E. M'Fadyen, promises to provide a number of books on subjects of vital interest. They are intended to show that the Church is

as capable to-day as ever in the past of dealing with the great problems of life, to instruct, and to influence every department of thought and activity. The first three volumes issued show that the series will fully justify its aim. The name of Dr. W. M. Clow, Principal of United Free Church, Glasgow, is already well known. His books on Christian doctrine and practice, such as *The Cross in Christian Experience*, *The Day of the Cross*, *The Secret of the Lord*, are on our shelves. We do not often find members of the non-Episcopal Churches writing on the Sacraments, and are consequently more than usually interested in Dr. Clow's contribution to the series, *The Church and the Sacraments*. His treatment of the subject shows at once that he is acquainted with the various shades of interpretation represented in all sections of the Church, while he does not disguise the necessity of writing from his own carefully considered and well-defined standpoint. He bases his argument on "the primary and fundamental importance, both historical and doctrinal, of the New Testament. Pre-eminence has been given to the interpretation of the mind of Christ and of His words and deeds as recorded by His Apostles." The introductory portion discusses the Sacramental principle and the doctrine of Christian Sacraments, the development of the Sacraments of Roman Catholicism, and the return to the New Testament. The second part is devoted to the origin, development and significance of Christian Baptism. His conclusion is that it is not a bare sign, nor a regenerating ceremonial. "It seals the work of the Spirit of God, and bestows a further enduement of His consecrating power."

In dealing with the Holy Communion he lays down the principle that there are two and only two ruling doctrines. These he describes as the "symbolic" and the "incarnative." Zwingli, Calvin and Luther in varying degrees represent the former. Its characteristic feature is that the bread and wine remain bread and wine. The second is the doctrine of the Church of Rome, and of this he says, "No one with the New Testament in his hands, can be persuaded that such a doctrine has any warrant in its statements."

It is a temptation to quote at length some of the impressive statements by which he enforces the conclusions drawn from these premises, and the historical evidence showing the development of the theory of sacrifice to replace the fact of communion, but we must be content to refer the reader to the book itself. It is satis-

factory to find a Presbyterian leader so much at one with Evangelical Churchmen in his teaching on the whole subject.

The second of the series is *The Church and the Creeds*, by David Lamont, B.D., Minister of Park United Free Church, Helensburgh. A brief historical account of some representative symbols, from the earliest of the creeds of Christendom—the Old Roman Creed—to the sixteenth-century creeds of the Protestant Churches, is made the basis of an examination of the character and purpose of all such summaries of our faith. He emphasizes the necessity of a creed “because the Gospel of Jesus Christ makes its appeal to men through their minds,” but the form is to be distinguished from the essence. It is startling to find the opinion expressed that “the Apostles’ Creed parts company with the New Testament emphasis.” He sets out a form for modern use with a view to the “recovery of the full apostolic emphasis.” In view of the proposals for the union of all the Churches, such a form must be considered, while it is to be borne in mind that its purpose is to be the confession of an individual belief, rather than the declaration of the full faith of the whole Church. We have given a very inadequate idea of the wealth of thought displayed in this suggestive volume, or of the extent of the author’s learning and the strength of his orthodoxy. It is worth reading simply to pick out such a telling expression as “Love is enthroned in the heart of truth.”

The third of the series is *The Church at Prayer and the World Outside*, by Prof. Percy Dearmer, D.D. As Professor of Art in King’s College, London, it is natural that the æsthetic aspect of worship should appeal strongly to him. He is already known as a writer on Ceremonial, and in seeking to make “the man outside” into a Churchgoer he is interested in the form of service most likely to attract him. The methods suggested are intellectual, psychic, and æsthetic. The creeds are not essential. Their recitations is an obstacle and not a help. The Churches are half-paralysed by cant phrases. The precarious condition of organized Christianity at the present day is due in large measure to bad art. The exclusion from worship of certain forms of beauty has been one of the weakest spots in Protestantism. Thus his criticism runs, and in the historical section it is extended to all the causes that produced the deteriora-

tion from the earliest worship of the Christian Church, as the nearest approach to the mind of Jesus Christ, till at last "the Mass has ceased to be a Communion, and has become a miracle . . . to the average man it is little more than a pious spectacle." The whole subject is considered with freshness and an evident desire to find the true solution of neglect of worship so as to inaugurate a new era of revived religion.

If anyone desires to see how an Anglo-Catholic treats the history of Religion during the last 350 years he should read Dr. Leighton Pullan's Bampton lectures—*Religion since the Reformation* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 12s. 6d. net). With ingenious dexterity he is able, from his extensive knowledge of the period, to select details that can either exalt his idea of Catholicism or depreciate Protestantism. Indulgences, for instance, are condemned, but he asserts that their consequences were not as bad as the Antinomianism produced by Luther's doctrine of justification by faith. The volume only professes to be a series of sketches. It is not chronologically arranged. It passes from Religion in Great Britain from 1550 to 1689, to the Roman Catholic Church from 1700 to 1854, and from Religion in Great Britain and America from 1689 to 1815 to Aspects of Lutheranism and Calvinism since 1700. A sympathetic survey is given of the Eastern Orthodox Church. The last lecture, on Aspects of Christian Thought since 1815, is one of the most interesting, as it deals with the period of the Tractarian Movement, and the later developments in the Church of Rome. His closing paragraphs are a vigorous denunciation of Modernism.

In *The First Six Centuries* (2s. 6d.), by F. W. Vroom, D.D., Archdeacon of Nova Scotia, S.P.C.K. issues a brief and useful series of sketches from Early Church History. They are intended primarily for teachers, but the general reader will find them not merely instructive, but interesting reading. The personalities of the period stand out with clearness, and the events associated with them bring into their proper places the persecutions, the Councils, and the development of teaching and organization. The general result is a well-defined picture, though there are statements with which we cannot agree, such as "that the Church of England repeatedly appeals to the teaching and practice of the early undivided Church."

In *Problems of the New Testament* (Oxford University Press, 6s. 6d. net), the Rev. R. H. Malden gives a brief and clear account of the various books, and discusses the modern views of their date and authorship. A brief introduction to each of the Epistles gives adequate help to the understanding of the contents. He is doubtful as to the authorship of the first and fourth Gospels, but he is satisfied as to the completeness of the account given of our Lord's person and work.

G. F. I.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS.

MINISTERIAL COMMISSION.

MINISTERIAL COMMISSION. By the Rev. C. Sydney Carter, M.A., Litt.D. London: *Longmans Green & Co.* 2s. 6d.

Small books are sometimes of first-rate importance to the average reader. When great problems are being discussed it is advantageous to have brought together the most valuable utterances of the men who know most, and to have the grounds of their argument put forward concisely and pointedly.

The whole subject of Reunion turns on two points: doctrine and order. As far as essential doctrine is concerned, the National and Free Church representatives found themselves at one when they in conference debated the proposals of Lambeth. When they came to order, it was at once seen that organization was to many a matter of great doctrinal moment and to others simply machinery adapted by God to do the best possible for the advancement of His Kingdom, whose subjects are men and women saved by the death of His Son. What is Ministerial Commission?—on what does it depend? and is it in the mind of God as shown in His revealed will confined in its valid exercise to one form of the Christian Ministry? Is there associated with its valid possession a sacerdotal function that can only be transmitted in one way—through Episcopal organization by the laying on of the hands of the Bishop on those who receive the priesthood? Bound up with Episcopacy is a theory of the Church, of Soteriology and of the Sacraments, that practically covers the whole ground of Christianity in action within the Body of Christ, and therefore the matter cannot be dismissed as of secondary importance to doctrinal soundness by those who look upon the Succession as a matter of life and death to the valid exercise of the ministry of grace.

Dr. Carter helps us to see where the truth lies by his frank and candid examination of scriptural and historical facts. He writes with competent knowledge of what is involved, and the Bishop of Chelmsford tells us in the foreword "Dr. Carter has