

BOOKS AND THEIR WRITERS.

WHATEVER disappointment we may feel at the apparently slow progress towards the realization of the unity of the Churches, we can all be glad of the opportunity afforded by the discussion of the subject for the production of books by representatives of the different sections of Christianity giving valuable information as to their teaching and outlook. There is already an extensive literature in existence dealing directly or indirectly with various phases of the subject. Two recent additions to the number deserve special attention. Dr. Carnegie Simpson, Professor of Church History in Westminster College, Cambridge, is already well known as the author of two books which have had a wide influence throughout the Christian world, *The Fact of Christ* and *The Facts of Life*. He is a clear thinker, with an unusual gift of forceful expression, and he has taken part as a representative of the Presbyterians in the Conferences on Reunion. As an outcome of his work on the "Committee of Six Anglicans and Six Free Churchmen who have met regularly at Lambeth Palace to explore fundamental questions relating to reunion," he has recently made an important contribution to the discussion in a book called *Church Principles*.

All discussion on the fundamental questions relating to reunion must begin with the New Testament. Dr. Carnegie Simpson gives the impression that he is endeavouring to examine the New Testament evidence frankly and freely, and as far as possible without pre-conceptions. In an opening chapter of attractive persuasiveness he gets to the root idea of the Church. "The Creative Fact" is Christ and "Where Jesus Christ is there is the Catholic Church." Church Principle, he reminds us, must not be confused with Legal rule. This places many ecclesiastical regulations in their proper category. When such an expression as "uncovenanted mercies" is used, he makes it clear that it would never occur to any one except under the stress of preconceived ecclesiastical theory that does not fit the facts. "The whole idea has no basis in the New Testament." Similarly he gets to the fundamental ideas in regard to the Ministry. It may give a new view point to some, and enable them to think out the true character of the ministerial commission,

to realize that "It is not ordination that makes the priest; it is redemption" and "What the Church does in Ordination is to recognize a ministry of Christ already in being." Again it is well to be reminded that "Grace is not some metaphysical or semi-physical influence or essence. It is personal." The neglect of this truth brings its own nemesis in some of the errors in Sacramental teaching from which the "Catholic" section of the Church suffers. He criticizes justly the use of the term "Sacramental Principle" as it is found in the writings of Dr. Gore and other of the same school. In regard to the Real Presence, he holds "the larger and worthier conception" that Christ is not the offered oblation but the Celebrant. "This is the greater doctrine of the Real Presence." He finds the basis of authority to be threefold—the evidence of history, the testimony of the Church, i.e. of Christian people, age after age, and experience.

There is a caustic side of Dr. Carnegie Simpson which we cannot resist illustrating, though it tells against ourselves. It may be that we can learn something from his stinging criticism. He says, "The English Churchman does not very much like principles, perhaps hardly knows one when he sees it; and he certainly has no intention of being a martyr prematurely or of dying when he can usefully live. What he wants is a working arrangement. And the average Anglican believes he has this in the English Establishment." We may forgive the partial truth in this statement out of gratitude for the high ideals that he sets before us in this work. When he strikes the deepest note we feel the inspiration of fundamental truth. The Living Church is to present Christ and His view of human life. Of this there are two main aspects, "an unworldly assessment of life's values" and "a really human sympathy." These lead on to the Christianization of human life. Many of our readers will, we are sure, desire to make a closer acquaintance with a book of exceptional interest.

The other book bearing upon the subject of reunion is Bishop Gore's recently issued *The Holy Spirit and the Church*. This is the third volume in his series on "The Reconstruction of Belief," and supplements his *Belief in God* and *Belief in Christ*. It is a further statement of his well-known views with which our readers are probably already familiar from such works as *The Body of Christ* and

Orders and Unity. He also sets out to examine the New Testament evidence, but the impression he leaves here as in his earlier works is that he comes to it with his mind filled with pre-conceived ideas of the Church, the Ministry, and the Sacraments. And although he describes the volume as "a challenge to think freely" we cannot free our minds of the impression that he is determined to find in the Gospels and Epistles the assumptions upon which his theories are based. We agree with him that in the region of current ecclesiastical controversies "the fetters are likely to be those of the spirit of party, which is apt to be singularly enslaving"; but when we endeavour to obey his request to lay aside "traditional assumptions as far as possible in order to ask again the question—What is the mind of Christ concerning the propagation of His religion? Does it not after all appear to be in a high degree probable that the New Testament documents interpret it aright, and that we cannot get behind them or away from them?" we are convinced that his interpretation is not the one that carries conviction. As there will be a fuller examination of the volume in this number of *THE CHURCHMAN* it is not necessary here to go into the questions raised. We hope our readers will study Dr. Gore's contribution to the subject. It contains much that is valuable, beside the matter that may be described as more immediately controversial. It is the statement of the "Catholic" position by one of its ablest exponents, and consequently contains the strongest evidence that can be brought forward in support of its claims.

There is something peculiarly attractive about the personality of Dr. Albert Schweitzer. In spite of the eschatological views put forward in his *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* his writings compel the attention of a wide circle of readers. This is no doubt due to the interest in the career of a theologian and University Professor, an accomplished musician—the greatest living exponent of Bach, who betook himself to the study of medicine in order that he might go out to Africa as a missionary. Those who have not read his account of his work at Lambarene on the Ogowe should at once obtain his *On the Edge of the Primeval Forest*. It is a fascinating record of a medical missionary's experiences, together with wise reflections on many subjects arising out of the contact of white men with the coloured races. In one chapter he gives a hint of

the studies that occupy his scanty leisure. "If the day has not been too exhausting I can give a couple of hours after supper to my studies in ethics and civilization as part of the history of human thought, any books I need for it and have not with me being sent me by Professor Stroh, of Zürich University. Strange, indeed, are the surroundings amid which I study; my table stands inside the lattice-door which leads on to the verandah, so that I may snatch as much as possible of the light evening breeze. The palms rustle an *obligato* to the loud music of the crickets and the toads, and from the forest come harsh and terrifying cries of all sorts. Caramba, my faithful dog, growls gently on the verandah, to let me know that he is there, and at my feet, under the table, lies a small dwarf antelope. In this solitude I try to set in order thoughts which have been stirring in me since 1900, in the hope of giving some help to the restoration of civilization. Solitude of the primeval forest, how can I ever thank you enough for what you have been to me? . . ."

It is from the surroundings thus graphically described that the first two parts of his "The Philosophy of Civilization" have come. They are the "Dale Memorial Lectures" for 1922, and are entitled, *The Decay and Restoration of Civilization* and *Civilization and Ethics*. There is also a smaller work, *Christianity and the Religions of the World*, being a course of lectures delivered at the Selly Oak Colleges, Birmingham, in February 1922. In these lectures he answers the question whether Christianity is the deepest expression of the religious mind. He contrasts the characteristic fundamental ideas of Christianity with those of the Graeco-Oriental religions of earlier days and with Brahmanism, Buddhism and Hinduism of to-day, and after a searching criticism of their various elements he shows the spiritual and ethical superiority of Christianity. The lectures were given to those who were preparing for missionary work, and his final appeal to them is that "if only our lives, in genuine nonconformity to the world, reveal something of what it means to be apprehended by the living, ethical God, then something of the truth of Jesus goes out from us." To students of Comparative Religion these lectures will be of special interest.

Two additional volumes in the Modern Churchman's Library will appeal to some of our readers. Mr. R. D. Richardson in *The*

Causes of the Present Conflict of Ideals in the Church of England gives an interesting historical survey of the course of theological thought, tracing back the three historic parties in the Church of England to their philosophical sources, and their interpretation of Christian origins. He gives an account of religious thought in the eighteenth century and the formative forces of the nineteenth, till he comes to its distinctive features. Here he offers a presentation of the positions of the Evangelicals and Anglo-Catholics which would probably be challenged by representatives of both parties, and he proceeds to estimate the forces at work in the formation of the future. While disagreeing with some of the statements of fact and many of the conclusions of the writer, we can recommend all who desire to know the true attitude of liberal Churchmen to read this presentation of their case.

Canon Glazebrook, in *The Apocalypse of St. John*, has set out the main results of Archdeacon Charles' Commentary. His conclusions have not commended themselves to all our most competent biblical students. We must wait for further discussion before their value is fully estimated. Those who desire to make acquaintance with them will find them adequately presented by Canon Glazebrook in this small volume.

Dr. H. R. Mackintosh, Professor of Theology, New College, Edinburgh, has brought together a number of his contributions to various magazines under the title *Some Aspects of Christian Belief*. The quality of Dr. Mackintosh's work is well known. Whatever aspect of theological thought he treats, he brings new light to bear upon it, and we all owe him a debt for his illuminating and stimulating contributions to our study. The present essays are of the same character. They bring the reader into contact with current thought upon questions of permanent interest. They cover a wide range both of theology and philosophy, and will help "busy readers anxious to keep in touch with lines of thought somewhat away from their dominant interests." It is only possible to indicate some of the subjects with which he deals. The opening essay is on History and the Gospel. The Conception of a Finite God, and The Vicarious Penitence of Christ are two subjects of special current interest. Jesus Christ and Prayer treats of the problem of prayer in our Lord's Life. The later essays are mainly philosophical, dealing

with Ritschlianism, the Psychology of Religion, the Subliminal Consciousness in Theology, Bergson and Christian thought, and Christianity and Absolute Idealism. To those interested in the philosophical aspects of theology these essays will provide an introduction to the latest thought.

A correspondent suggests that we should recommend some short books of a lighter character to beguile an hour not given to more serious study, and yet not altogether unprofitable for a preacher's purposes. Melrose's Pocket Series has a number of delightful little studies of life that just meet the need. They are from America and have a quaint touch reminiscent of the Scotch style. Among the most interesting of them are David Grayson's *Adventures in Contentment*, *The Friendly Road* (New Adventures in Contentment). The titles of these almost indicate their character. His *Hempfield* is a charming little story. Somewhat similar in character is Mary E. Waller's *The Woodcarver of 'Lympus*. It would be interesting to us to know our readers' opinions of this type of American book.

G. F. I.

A special interest attaches to *The Story of Wadhurst* (Tunbridge Wells: Courier Co., Ltd., 4s. net) by reason of the fact that it is closely associated with the memory of the late Dean Wace. Wadhurst was his old home; he always felt drawn to it; and he contributed to this little volume an "In Memoriam" notice of the men of Wadhurst who fell in the Great War. It is an impressive tribute, such as he alone could write, and, dated December 17, 1923, it is believed to be the last paper he signed for publication. The volume is the joint work of Mrs. C. A. F. Rhys Davids (*née* Foley), D.Litt., M.A., whose lecture of thirty years ago forms the basis of the story, and Mr. Alfred A. Wace, I.C.S. (retired), who has edited the notes on which the lecture was founded, amplified them, and brought the story up to date. And a most interesting story it is, appealing alike to the historian, the antiquarian, the economist and the general reader. The history of Wadhurst Church is exceptionally well told. The list of Vicars goes back to 1313. We are told, also, much that is useful to know about old houses and farms, the industries of the place, its agricultural history, and so on. A sheaf of gleanings and reminiscences, and a glowing account of the devoted part taken by the men of Wadhurst in the Great War, give just that living touch to the story which makes it of present-day value and interest. The Roll of Service is a very long one and does infinite credit to this charming Sussex town.