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A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

a state of moral perfection, the total sum of happiness would instantly be diminished, and the society would of necessity cease *pro tanto* to represent the ideal state" (p. 26). And is that the goal of the "Synthetic Philosophy"? Well may this writer indirectly admit that it teaches "an altogether different moral theory" from Christianity (p. 30). For its theory is founded on nothing better, nothing higher, and nothing more substantial than simple, undisguised *naturalism*. "Other than this natural process of development whereby, through the influence which the ever-changing conditions of social life are continuously exerting upon the human nervous system, men, so to speak, grow into morality, somewhat as the sapling develops into a tree—other than this natural process of the moralization of the nervous system, the philosophical Evolutionist has no special theory of ethics, no particular scheme of moral reformation to advocate or defend" (pp. 27, 28). "The moralization of the nervous system" (p. 29), this is what is to take the place and fulfil the task of all the forces and spirit of Christianity! This is the mighty process which is to make possible for mankind the evolution of the "ideal state," on which everything ultimately depends, but which the sudden lapse of one of its units would shake to its foundation! Add to this the fact that the pamphlet before us concludes with the characteristic teaching of this know-nothing philosophy (p. 34), whose adherent is yet to be thought capable of "pointing to religion"—but observe what follows, "as he pictures her to himself." We can but express a firm conviction, which will no doubt be held by believers everywhere, that anything like a general acceptance of such teaching would be deplorable.

JOHN R. PALMER.

Short Notices.

The Romance of Christian Work and Experience. By the Rev. W. HAY M. H. AITKEN. J. F. Shaw and Co. Pp. 520. Price 5s.

THIS is an extraordinary title, but, as the book is a romance of Christian work and experience, we cannot find fault with it. Mr. Aitken presents his readers with something that many teachers will value, but his book is something very different from an indexed repertory of anecdotes designed to be dipped into for a teacher's emergencies. Nor have we here a mere string of stories, lacking in literary sense, a routine of *mirabile dictu*, breaking upon us with inconsequent surprises, and jading us with the incoherence, the express rushes, the sharp stops and starts, of "tit-bits" perusal. This book, with its dramatic quality, and spiritual insight, and human sympathy, and alleviating playfulness of occasional humour, is a striking testimony to Mr. Aitken's prowess as a mission-preacher and as a man of letters.

It is an extraordinary outcome of twenty-five years of special work of a kind to involve enormous emotional outlay. We marvel that, after this long period of strain and repeated experience, a great missionary should find unabated poetry and unhackneyed beauty in the responses and circumstances of men brought into contact with the story of the Cross; that his work should be surer, sweeter and fresher than a drama to him—rather a "Romance"—and that he should be its unexhausted artist. For

some readers, this "Romance" of truth will doubtless have an evidential value. Not a few may judge that

"Art may tell a truth—

c s c • c

Suffice the eye, and save the soul beside."

The English Church, the Priest, and the Altar. By FRANCIS PEEK. Lawrence and Bullen. Pp. 60.

This little book vigorously presents the case against the Neo-Catholic party within the English Church. It treats the sacerdotal system under four heads: Apostolic Succession; the Sacrament of Penance; the Real Presence; and the Eucharistic Sacrifice, illustrating these doctrines by ample quotations from the manuals compiled by Mr. Vernon Staley and Canons Carter and Knox Little.

Readers of Mr. Peek's article on the Church crisis in the current (January) number of the *Contemporary* will find the volume under review usefully supplementary. The contrast, carefully established by quotation, between the English Prayer-Book and the Neo-Catholic manuals is clear and instructive.

Our Exemplar; or, What would Jesus do? By CHARLES M. SHELDON. S. W. Partridge and Co. Pp. 319.

"Our Exemplar" conveys a message, but the message is rather too much for its vehicle.

It is as though one sitting down to compile a parochial year-book should say: "Go to! Parochial finance shall 'enter in at lowly doors.' I will write a tale." In such a case one would not expect—and in this book we do not find—a dominant human note, an artistic unity. Mr. Sheldon's heroes and heroines—there are several of both varieties—fall in love with one another before you feel you know them. While to the reader their features still have the smooth inarticulateness noticeable in dolls, they fall definitely in love, and otherwise do sublime things. And the marionettes of this miracle-play are so numerous. They trot upon the scene; they do something significant of the moral; they jostle; they open their lips; they embrace, and they are whisked off or ground under the wheels of the moral purpose before you are sure whether you have been introduced or whether you would recognise any of them at a future meeting.

The story ends, like a year of parish work, in a ministerial reverie, which takes the place of a dénouement.

And yet the book has a message that is, we doubt not, already commending it to many readers. Are we, it asks, seriously trying in our daily life to do what we believe Jesus would do were He in our place? We have no right, if we call ourselves Christians, to refuse to face this question.

Very probably those who do face it, and abide by its probation, are very far from being as uniformly successful as the disciples at Raymond. Some of these good people may seem to us too self-conscious, or even mistakenly local. Possibly—*pace* Calvin Bruce—Jesus would not preach "a fellowship not of creed but of conduct." We are as much at liberty not to think with Edward Norman that the Lord would preach patriotism and profit-sharing, as that profit-sharing employés would, as a matter of course, rejoice in the application of principles that cut down profits, or a foreigner be moved to worship the apotheosis of the spread eagle. But the demand that "Our Exemplar" makes, with evident honesty and earnestness, for real sacrifice of self for the good of others, on the part of all who would follow the Saviour, is subject to no dispute. The great virtue of this book is that it puts this great fact in a way that will impress, and, we hope, persuade many.

The Christ of History and Experience. By Rev. D. W. FORREST, M.A., Messrs. T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh. Pp. 479. Price 10s. 6d.

This book is a useful contribution to an important branch of evidential theology. It treats, on good academic ground, and in a fairly popular manner, the great theme of "the relation between the historical and the spiritual in Christianity." The well-founded Christian reads and believes the inspired Evangelical records. He also lives in present fellowship with Him of whom the Gospels tell him. His religion is historical and spiritual. What is the common element of these two parts of his religious possession? And, is it something that may be produced to explain his intellectual persuasion and his manner of life? The common element, the link, the explanation, is the personality of the Lord Jesus Christ. This supreme miracle is, as the late Prebendary C. A. Row showed long ago, in his "Jesus of the Evangelists," and the Bampton Lectures of 1877, so indelibly and artlessly and unanimously and uniquely portrayed by the writers of the four Gospels as to appeal to us with all the power of a present fact.

Men doubt the miracles. Especially, on what Mr. Illingworth quite fairly calls *imaginative* ground, they are persuaded that the miracle of the Incarnation is intrinsically improbable, because our earth is a tiny planet in an apparently infinite universe. But we know "Personality." Within this realm we know as a present and energetic fact the Christian life. This fact, our knowledge of personality proclaims to us, is unique. If we seek for its unique cause, we are inevitably led to the Founder of the Christian religion, and we refuse to assume that He was not more than man.

The presumption is for, and not against, His uniqueness. We should be sensible of some intellectual confusion, we should be disposed to disbelieve the records of the Lord's life and the picture of His Personality, did they present us only with the figure and doings of a supreme human native.

Mr. Forrest deals in this volume of lectures with the moral self-consciousness of Christ, and His assertions and claims; the growth of His self-consciousness, and His method of self-manifestation to men as the Incarnate Son.

From these studies of the personality of the "Historical Christ," the lecturer passes to a consideration, in his fourth chapter, of the Lord's resurrection. This serves as an important transition-study between the lectures devoted to an exploration of the consciousness of the Christ of the Gospels and those that treat of the experience in the life of the Church and the Christian of the spiritual influence of the unique "Personality." This fourth lecture, though necessarily it goes over the old ground on which the objectivity of the great miracle stands vindicated, has some fresh thought for us upon the uniqueness of the Christophanies—those blendings of the earthly and spiritual; those self-consistent revelations from the border-line of two worlds; those historical wonders confirming a vital spiritual impression. Quite rightly, as we think, Mr. Forrest urges that it is better to approach evidence of the Resurrection, asking, Is it a fact that can be verified by human experience? than claiming only to demonstrate it as "the most certain of all historical events." The best evidence is a possession of the spiritual "power of the Resurrection."

We can believe in the resurrection both of the Lord and of Lazarus; but, whereas the man of Bethany—even in Browning's clever psychological picture of him—returns to former conditions, the Saviour permanently supersedes old conditions, marshalling in a new spiritual life for us to know and share.

We cordially recommend the book, and particularly its opening chapters to our readers.

Parish Church Tracts. Published by J. Gardner Hitt, Edinburgh. Pp. 100.

These tracts, written by various ministers of the Church of Scotland, seem very well adapted for use in the Church for which they are intended. For mission tracts, the element of instruction predominates rather largely—more largely than would be advisable, perhaps, were they intended for parochial use in England. In their recognition of Easter, their strong support of weekly Communion and of weekday services (distinct from the weekly prayer-meeting)—perhaps, too, in their attempt to suggest some provision for the time when “the question of children confessing their Baptism becomes urgent,” their feeling is definitely ecclesiastical. Their style is clear, practical and earnest.

Readings for Mothers' Meetings. S.P.C.K. Pp. 58.

These twelve short readings are intended for use at mothers' meetings before the opening of the inevitable “amusing book.” They would be almost good enough, were they drawn out into narrative, to oust the “amusing book” altogether.

Foundation Truths of Scripture as to Sin and Salvation. By Professor J. LAIDLAW. T. and T. Clark. Pp. 131. Price 1s. 6d.

This little volume treats its great subject with much compactness. Its omission of reference to baptism in the chapters entitled “Initial Grace” and “Our Adoption as Sons,” and its reference to the Lord's Supper as “the Sacrament,” show a different point of view to our own; but, with a reservation as to these two chapters, we can warmly recommend its lucid and Scriptural pages. Y.M.C.A. members should find it very useful.

Lessons in the School of Prayer. By ARTHUR T. PIERSON, D.D. Hodder and Stoughton. Pp. 151.

In this book Dr. Pierson collates our Lord's words about prayer, and presents his subject as a practice of the presence of God. Prayer is an “art of thinking only of God.” It involves “a disclosure of God to the soul.” In its highest expression, worship, it fills heaven. Dr. Pierson comprehensively describes it as “the meeting of a human suppliant, alone with God, for supplication and communion at the mercy-seat, and revelation of the existence, presence and character of God.”

With much of this presentment of prayer, and altogether with the careful and devout manner in which, as those who know anything of Dr. Pierson would expect, the book is written, we gladly agree. But the definition we have quoted seems to base “prayer” on *closet* prayer—a partial basis surely—and the work generally appears to take insufficient account of that supreme mystery of prayer, the art of thinking *with* God. This, the greatest miracle of prayer, is evidently something distinct from “thinking of God,” or merely receiving a “disclosure of God.” It is the bringing one who prays under the Divine action and into harmony with the Divine mind and will. It is the secret of “answered prayers.” It

“draws the blessings from above
That God designs to give.”

With Dr. Pierson's views as to liturgical forms we could hardly be expected to agree. “Inflexible forms are,” he says, “like swaddling-

clothes or embalming-cloths." Instead, therefore, of a liturgy, we are advised to model our prayers according to the manner of Scripture. But why should forms modelled on the Word be unjustifiable? Nothing is more inflexible than Scripture. Dr. Pierson says that a prayer moulded in Scripture terms may be boldly urged at the throne of grace. But by what canon is Scripture to be applied inevitably to a particular set of current circumstances?

In prayer we are concerned with a set of human circumstances, as well as with certain words of Scripture. We need, therefore, if we are to pray aright, not only that our petitions should conform to Scripture, but that the Holy Spirit should teach us what Scripture to make use of in our prayer. Neither the reading of the Scriptures nor the business of praying can profit us much without present dependence on the Holy Ghost. If we forget this grand condition, we may very possibly use God's *littera scripta* as though He were caught and limited for ever and in all circumstances by a specific promise, unless, indeed, infallibility in interpretation is predicated for the praying man.

In any case, if we may so rest on Scripture in prayer, is it incredible to us that Scriptural forms of prayer—proved for ages by devout souls—may be something better than "swaddling-clothes" or "embalming-cloths"?

The last chapter carries us into a higher atmosphere, we are glad to observe, and, does much to remedy what seem to us to be the defects of the earlier part of the book.

The Churchman's Manual. By the Most Reverend ENOS NUTTALL, D.D., Archbishop of the West Indies. S.P.C.K. Pp. 328.

We cordially welcome this enlarged edition of Archbishop Nuttall's manual. Within its compact and well-printed pages it contains much help for devotion and a good store of well-ordered instruction. Both features—the devotional and the instructive—are limned clearly, and, in parts, beautifully; but the former, coming as it does from one who is "satisfied with the teaching of the Prayer-Book," is especially valuable. Devotional earnestness has been much exhibited in manuals during recent years, but its spirit has usually suggested emancipation from our Common Prayer-Book standpoint. It has been often medieval or continental, or it has betrayed the whims and gloatings and linguistic preciousness of a type of undenominationalism. Very often it has identified "spiritual" with "interdenominational." Dr. Nuttall's manual is inspired, both in its instructions and in its devotions, by an appreciation, as the author tells us in his preface, "of the wonderful breadth and solidity and beauty and Catholicity and Scripturalness of the teaching and devotional forms which the leaders of the Reformation have embodied in the Book of Common Prayer."

This manual accordingly makes no attempt to show the unsatisfactoriness of the Prayer-Book.

The prayers—private, family and occasional—follow the best examples of English devotions, and have a dignity that does not put them beyond the grasp of a properly-prepared Confirmation candidate. The preparation for Holy Communion is delightfully unmorbid, and particularly valuable in its insistence on, and help in, meditation.

The instructions bearing on the great spiritual and social events of life, and on various doctrines and duties, the practical notes on the Prayer-Book, and the catechetical section, enhance the value of the book for its younger readers.

We hardly know a better manual for persons who have been recently confirmed, or for devoutly-disposed people who have found, or who are feeling, their way to our Communion.

There is very little that is West-Indian about the book, though some of its readers may hardly know how to answer the question, "Have I believed in Obeah?"

The Month.

AS we are sending these notes to press comes the sad news of the death of President Faure. Misfortunes are indeed thickening for France. There is an uneasy feeling on the Continent, not by any means in the nature of a panic, but a settled conviction that trouble is brewing. The Tzar's peace manifesto has appealed to the sentiments of a goodly number of people, chiefly in England; but the various Governments appear to be showing their appreciation of it by increased activity in their dockyards and arsenals, and by the steady accumulation of war-material and stores. Probably when the trouble comes—as seems almost inevitable—it will hail from France. The politicians of Paris present, indeed, a curious problem. Their proud vaunt, "Liberty, equality, fraternity" (if it ever meant anything), has been exchanged by many for the odious cry, "A mort les Jnifs!" Let Paris beware. It has been the fate of the Jew to serve as a target for national malice and religious hatred; but we do not remember any nation which has pursued such a policy as a loud faction is pursuing towards the Jews, emerging from the struggle unhurt or untarnished.

Indeed, upon all the three great Latin peoples there would seem to have fallen a species of blight. Italy is bankrupt commercially and spiritually; Spain is only partially awake, and her stagnant "Catholicism"—the bequest of Philip II.—is half of it pagan and nearly all of it superstition; while poor France—"that light, unbelieving nation," as Carlyle says of her—is endeavouring to divert the thoughts of her people from the internal dry-rot which is eating out the very heart of her Government by a foolish policy of "bluff" directed mainly against England, but not without a significant side-reference to America. M. Lockroy has said quite recently that war between France and England cannot be postponed more than two years. Possibly it may be less. Any way, France, by her action in Madagascar and on the Arabian seaboard, is endeavouring to precipitate a crisis which, when it does come, will probably involve the whole Continent. Notwithstanding,

Τὰ ὕτα Θεῶν ἐν γούνασι κείται.

The Very Rev. Watkin Herbert Williams, D.D., Dean of St. Asaph, was confirmed on Tuesday, January 31, at noon, in his election to the See of Bangor. The ceremony took place in Bow Church, Cheapside, the old home of the Court of Arches.

One of the events of the month is Mr. Kipling's seven-verse poem published in the *Times* of February 4, bearing the title "The White