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between the two versions of the Christian faith is that the older version believes that God has done more for mankind, and is prepared to do more, than Liberal Christianity believes that He has done or ever will do. But since all religion that has its

roots in the Bible believes that God is always greater, better, and readier to help mankind than any one of us ever believes, the presumption of Faith must always cleave to the greater God, who is the God expressed by the Threefold Name.

Literature.

THE BIBLE AND THE GREEKS.

IN his recent book, *The Bible and the Greeks* (Hodder & Stoughton; 10s. 6d. net), Professor C. H. Dodd, D.D., of Manchester University, has made accessible to students of Theology and the New Testament a series of linguistic studies of very great value and importance. He modestly describes his work as studies 'from the notebooks of a student of the New Testament,' and offers them to fellow-students 'not without the hope that they may be of use to others who are interested in the thought of the Græco-Roman world in general.' The main theme of the book is the interaction of Hebrew and Greek thought in the centuries immediately before and after the time of Christ, as it is reflected in the Septuagint and in the Hermetic Literature. Part I. deals with the vocabulary of Hellenistic Judaism found in the Septuagint, and includes detailed discussions of such themes as the Names of God, the Law, Righteousness, Mercy and Truth, Sin and Atonement. Perhaps one would hardly expect to find a marked difference in the way in which Paul and the Fourth Evangelist use the term νόμος, and a reinforcement of the claim that Jewish elements prevail in the thought of the Fourth Gospel, but both these results follow from Professor Dodd's work. Especially welcome is the reprint of the scholarly article which Professor Dodd contributed a year or two ago to the 'Journal of Theological Studies' on ἰλάσκεσθαι and other allied words. His conclusion is that 'Hellenistic Judaism, as represented by the LXX, does not regard the cultus as a means of pacifying the displeasure of the Deity, but as a means of delivering man from sin, and it looks in the last resort to God Himself to perform that deliverance, thus evolving a meaning of ἰλάσκεσθαι strange to non-biblical Greek' (p. 93). He also says—and this opinion is less frequently quoted than the one already given—that the verb is used in the Septuagint as conveying 'the sense of per-

forming an act whereby guilt or defilement is removed.'

Part II. treats the subject of Hellenistic Judaism and the Hermetica. In important respects Professor Dodd's results supplement those of Reitzenstein and the late Walter Scott, for while these writers emphasize respectively the Egyptian and the Greek influences reflected in the Hermetic Writings, Professor Dodd concentrates on the Jewish affinities, and by a careful comparison with the Septuagint shows that the language and thought of the Old Testament have influenced the Hermetist. The Hermetist, he says, 'is indebted to Judaism, not only for the creation myth, which he derives from *Genesis*, but also for a part of the substance of his religious experience and teaching' (p. 200). The New Testament student will appreciate the importance of this conclusion, when he recalls the facility with which some commentators quote parallels between sayings in the first tractate of the Hermetic Corpus (*Poimandres*) and similar sayings in the Gospels. If Professor Dodd is right, it is no longer just to press these parallels to the detriment of the Gospel sayings, for in his considered opinion the parallels 'are explicable as the result of minds working under the same general influences' (p. 247). He believes that in the New Testament 'such influences are always secondary,' and that 'the regulative motive is that supplied by the originating impulse of Christianity itself.' If the reader of this review is interested in those ultimate problems which confront the New Testament student of to-day, he will see that this book is one he simply cannot afford to miss.

THE ETHICS OF POWER.

To readers of 'Mind,' 'Philosophy,' 'The Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society' or 'The Classical Quarterly,' the name of Philip Leon is not unfamiliar. They will not be surprised that he has published a work on moral philosophy—

The Ethics of Power (Allen & Unwin ; 10s. 6d. net). Mr. Leon has two general criticisms to pass on most books on Ethics, and his own work on those two points is in sharp contrast. For one thing they are usually far too abstract ; Mr. Leon's treatment is concrete, abounding in felicitous quotations from a wide range of general literature and everyday experience. For another thing they pose questions as to what is goodness. In Mr. Leon's view that is fruitless, the question that is at once really interesting and important is the problem of evil. Hence he gives his book the subtitle 'or The Problem of Evil.' It is a remarkable book. It is one of the most stimulating that we have read for some time. If here and there it is even provocative, that adds to the interest. It is written in almost breezy style, and if new terms have sometimes to be coined they are never pedantic but always self-explanatory and justifiable.

We can merely state Mr. Leon's main and central contention. Evil arises from egotism which he carefully and at some length distinguishes from egoism. Egotism takes manifold forms, some of which may resemble virtuous action, but it may be defined simply as lust of power. It is the negation of real morality the inspiration of which is love of Goodness. Very impressively Mr. Leon shows that the dangerous present state of the world, manifest in Nazi-ism but by no means confined to Germany, is due to this love and worship of power, in which destructiveness may be said to be inherent. Let us give a few of his own sentences. 'It is a commonplace that Man is now attaining power (for destruction as well as construction) greater than he has ever had before. But as his power increases so increases also his love of power, of power not as a means but as an end, as greatness or position. . . . Nothing is more likely than that the nations of the world will increasingly rather than decreasingly strive with each other for that position. . . . What shall stay the general destruction which undoubtedly threatens from the increasing lust for power stimulated by ever more numerous and facile temptations? If the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah is averted from the world this will only be because there are found sufficient lovers of righteousness, men who do not seek after greatness nor use its language, but from love of Goodness seek only to embody Goodness.'

IMMORTALITY.

Surely it is with considerable hesitancy that one adds a new book to the multitude of books on

Immortality. But apparently Dr. Frederick A. M. Spencer has not hesitated to do so. What must have given him confidence is his conviction that out of the various strands of thought furnished by the past a conception of the future life may be developed that shall include and be true to the essentials of the Christian revelation, and at the same time be in harmony with man's deepest intuitions and aspirations and with the relevant facts of science and history. Such a conception he offers as the culmination of his recent volume, *The Future Life* (Hamish Hamilton ; 7s. 6d. net).

Those who are acquainted with Dr. Spencer's former works will expect to find here the fruits of wide reading and scholarly reflection, and they will not be disappointed. One admires in particular the steady progression of the argument as the advance is made through Hebrew searchings, Jewish imaginings, Gospel revelation, Apostolic beliefs, Greek speculations, Theological interpretations, and Psychic communications. A discussion of the belief in metempsychosis or reincarnation, pre-modern and modern, leads to a consideration of 'evolutionary immortality' ; may not this belief, it is asked, bring the belief in a general resurrection into relation to the long evolution of man? Such an interpretation of the Christian hope has already been presented by the movement of Polish Messianism, particularly as expounded by Lutoslawski.

At this point Dr. Spencer returns to the record of Christian origins, where he finds a widely pervading suggestion that the salvation and spiritual development of individuals is bound up with and effected through the salvation and spiritual development of a community, whether nation or church or the human race as a whole. Of cardinal significance in this context is the resurrection of Christ. It is just here, however, that many who have travelled sympathetically with Dr. Spencer will be inclined to part company with him. For they will regard him as unduly literalist in his interpretation of the resurrection of Christ.

None the less one cannot but sympathize with his effort to maintain such an optimistic view of the future as this : 'Accepting the supreme Christian doctrine, that God is love, we infer that individuals are preserved through death for a continuance in the development of the good life. Now there are two strands of Christian belief in which this development is continued : first, belief in the transference of souls into a non-physical state at death ; secondly, belief in the restoration of souls in a physical form into the physically conditioned community in which they were before. We have reasons for

thinking that there is truth in both these ancient modes of imagining the future life. . . . We have seen that they become naturally synthesized in the light of the concept of evolution, leading to the comprehensive notion of the progress of man, both collective and individual, both in physical bodies and in bodies that are not physical, towards an immortality that embraces and secures and enhances the values experienced in mortality.'

THE BOOK OF DANIEL.

In *Darius the Mede and the Four World Empires in the Book of Daniel*, by Professor H. H. Rowley (University of Wales Press Board, Cardiff; 12s. 6d. net), we have a clear, concise, and most interesting study of contemporary theories on this debatable subject. The author is already well known for his monographs on the Aramaic language and questions connected with the historicity of the Book of Daniel, and this new work does not fall one whit short in its scholarship and its excellent presentation of the subject. The primary purpose of the volume is to provide a critical analysis of the arguments that have been advanced in favour of the current views of various kinds, but the author has not hesitated to indicate the conclusions to which he has been forced. So far as Darius the Mede is concerned, he finds no way of reconciling the Book of Daniel with assured history; and in regard to the four empires, he believes that the identification with the Babylonian, Median, Persian, and Macedonian is the only one that accords with the data. It follows that the Book of Daniel cannot be a work of the sixth century B.C., but must be placed in the second. At the same time, he regards the Book as a unity, written by one author, owing to the common error spread throughout the whole of it, namely, the conception of a Median empire between the Neo-Babylonian and the Persian. In spite of its historical inaccuracy, he believes that the religious value of the Book is not weakened but strengthened. It is gratifying to have this view from one who knows the subject thoroughly. Many people suppose that the whole structure of the Christian faith rests on the case for the sixth-century origin of the Book, but their fears are certainly groundless. It is enough that the message enshrined is true to the heart of God. Few books have occasioned more discussion and disagreement than the Book of Daniel—the bibliography, a most important one, given by the author of the present work, contains about five hundred references—but we venture to say that nowhere has the subject been

treated with such thoroughness, sound reasoning, and outstanding scholarship as in this volume. It deserves a place in the library, not only of every Old Testament scholar, but of all interested in Biblical history.

MYSTICS.

Remembering the long and splendid annals of mysticism and the great names who have a place in them, it was with eagerness one opened *Modern Mystics*, by Sir Francis Younghusband, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E. (Murray; 10s. 6d. net). But it was to be met by disappointment. The distinguished author reiterates his agreement with Bergson, 'that the great mystics gave us an indication of the direction in which the human race would evolve.' That is a terrifying prospect, if those here set before us are to be taken as indicative of the race that is to be. Those chosen from the East are all well known, and their fame is secure—Keshub Chender Sen, Ramakrishna, Vivekenanda and the Bab. But, with all their gifts, they are, somehow to an ordinary man, strained and unhealthy; and their religion out of drawing. Take Ramakrishna, a much bigger personality than one might gather from this sketch of him. And yet, surely, his propensity to fall into sudden trances, or such a fact as that for six months he masqueraded as a woman madly in love with Krishna, betokens abnormality which it is not desirable should become universalized.

And what is one to say of those chosen to represent the West—Thérèse de Lisieux from the Roman Communion, the authoress of the Golden Fountain from Protestantism, and the leaders of the Welsh Revival of 1904-05 as an instance of Mass Mysticism? The first has already been canonized amid perhaps unprecedented scenes of popular enthusiasm. Yet, as here represented, she appears as a self-willed and disagreeable child, with a pathetically distorted religion—an essentially vain soul—seeking to do some big thing, with 'I' far too prominent in thought and plan, although her final wish on her too early deathbed is both moving and noble. But compare her with Brother Lawrence, to whom in some ways she approximates, and how small she is! While as to the second, one does hope that this is not the subject of Miss Underhill's wonderful poem called 'A Portrait,' to which this life has some resemblance. For here, too, is a selfish nature, always self-absorbed, and this she still remains even in her religion and its ecstasies.

Sir Francis gives us some advice on how the average person might become a practical mystic.

The methods advocated, well enough so far as they go, seem vague and inchoate and much less likely to achieve real spiritual outcome than those practised by millions of plain folk day by day, who through them possess God, and walk with Him, and show Him in entire simplicity and unselfconsciousness to all with whom they mingle.

Books multiply on the 'present situation,' economic and religious. The latest is *You and I and Chaos: An Ultimatum*, by Mr. Charles Copeman (Allen & Unwin; 6s. net). The second part of the title does not need explanation. The first part means that the solution rests with individual men and women rather than with governments. The writer's main criticism of the present system is that it stands between man and an abundant life. This system (the capitalist) is the result of the religion of mammon. That religion must be replaced by a really effective Christianity, and the present capitalistic system must give way to a socialist, the chief feature of which will be that there will be equality of income. These are the chief features of a book, which is characterized by real religious idealism and intense moral fervour.

A book of a somewhat unusual character has been written by Canon W. J. Sparrow Simpson, *Religious Thought in France in the Nineteenth Century* (Allen & Unwin; 5s. net). It is unusual because we seldom think of religious thought in connexion with France at all! Yet there were Comte and Renan and Loisy, not to speak of Sabatier and Monod. The writer has taken a wide survey, beginning with the religion of Positivism and ending with a charming sketch of the literary men who were attracted to the Church. The most interesting chapters in the book are those on Loisy and Bergson, and any one wishing to know their intellectual position and history will find an intelligent account of them here. The book is a very delightful one to read, and, because of its unfamiliar theme, particularly informative.

For the securing of peace in the world there is a growing agreement that some form of collective action is essential. Pacifists approve this as a second-best and temporary measure. But there is a difference of opinion as to the form this collective action should take. Lord Davies advocates a strong 'police' force under the control of an international executive. Professor W. McDougall sug-

gests a Super Air Force. In *War: Its Curse and Cure* (Allen & Unwin; 4s. 6d. net) the Rev. Prebendary W. L. Grane rejects these expedients on account of the difficulties in the formation (personnel) and the control (by what authority?) of the force required. His solution is joint organized action against aggression between the leading nations. 'Each and all of them,' he quotes from Lord Bryce with approval, 'must join in coercing by their united strength any State which may disregard the obligations it has undertaken.' This opinion is enforced by a discussion of the evils of war and of the futility of the measures hitherto adopted for preventing its outbreak.

'Abailard, the true originator of the scholastic theology and the real founder of the University of Paris, has not hitherto been known to English readers in any treatise representative of his work as a theologian and philosopher.' In those words the Rev. J. Ramsay McCallum, M.A., Rector of Eversden, justifies his publication of *Abailard's Ethics* (Blackwell; 6s. net). The book consists of a translation of Abailard's *Scito Teipsum*, with an Introduction. The author is to be congratulated on a most felicitous translation, and thanked for a very interesting and lucid introduction. Abailard, as he shows, was a pioneer in the study of moral philosophy. With the faults of a pioneer he yet made a notable contribution which his own age was incapable of accepting or appreciating. Of special interest are such points as his finding the essence of sinfulness in *intentio* or motive, and his sharp criticism of some abuses of the contemporary penitential system. It is a little surprising that the bibliography does not mention some valuable expositions of the views of Abailard, such as Sidgwick's in his 'History of Ethics,' or Workman's in 'The Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics.'

The Thirlwall and Gladstone Prize Essay for 1933, written by Mr. E. R. Taylor, B.A., has been expanded and published under the title *Methodism and Politics* (Cambridge University Press; 7s. 6d. net). While it will naturally be of special interest to Methodists, it may be cordially recommended to the attention of a much wider circle. It deals with a problem which has not hitherto received the consideration or even the notice it merits—how are the relationships between denominational religion and party politics in England to be explained? Before the end of last century it was, broadly speaking, true that Anglicans were mostly Conservative in politics, while Dissenters were the strength and substance

of Liberalism. How did this come about? That is the question Mr. Taylor sets out to answer. To find an answer he considers specially the history of Methodism during the sixty years 1791-1851. Methodism was, to begin with, Conservative, but by the end of the period had to a great extent become Liberal. The factors which produced this change of political thought are traced and evaluated, and the whole book will be found not only interesting but on many points illuminative of both English Nonconformity and English party politics.

The Anglo-Catholic point of view dominates a series of essays which have been collected by Mr. V. A. Demant under the general title *Faith that Illuminates*. The writers are Lord Justice Slesser, Maurice Reckitt, W. J. Peck, R. Ellis Roberts, T. S. Eliot, and P. C. T. Widdrington (Centenary Press; 3s. 6d. net). The subjects are Religion and Literature, Religion and Leisure, Economics, Politics, Philosophy and Morality. The chapters were originally lectures given to public audiences in the Parish Hall of a church in Surrey. They have obviously been rewritten, but they retain their popular character. The most elaborate, and probably the ablest, is that on Religion and Economics, by the Rev. W. G. Peck. None of them is very profound, but all are interesting, and all share a common conviction, that religion, the Christian religion, the Catholic religion, can alone meet the varied needs of man. The editor should have corrected the extraordinary 'break' made by the writer of the essay on Religion and Philosophy at the foot of p. 162 and the lines that follow. It would be too unkind to disclose what it is.

The author of 'Tell John,' the Rev. Geoffrey Allen, has issued through Messrs. Maclehose & Co. a book, with the title *Christ the Victorious*, which is in reality a collection of sermons (5s. net). They have no special connecting thread unless the fact that they are all on some form of Christian experience or duty. Forgiveness, Salvation, My Neighbour, Prayer, the Church, Sincerity, are typical headings. We commend the book very cordially. The discourses are sound without being narrow. They are all marked by reality and by an insight and intelligence which are as evident as their deep earnestness.

The Committee of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on Public Worship has issued, with the sanction of the General Assembly, *Prayers for the Christian Year* (Milford; 3s. 6d. net). Forms

of prayer for this kind of occasion have not hitherto been available, and, in view of the growing practice in Presbyterianism of observing the Christian Year by special services, it was desirable that such forms should be provided. No arguments are needed to prove the value of such commemoration services and it is an encouraging fact that they are being so widely held. In addition to the great festivals, and the days of Holy Week, Trinity Sunday, St. Andrew's Day, Peace Sunday, as well as the Old and New Years, are included. The fact that the book is edited by Dr. Millar Patrick is a guarantee of its worth. This collection of prayers will do much to advance the cause in whose interest they have been published—the wider and more devout observance of the great Christian Days. It is a pity that the sources of the prayers have not been indicated.

An excellent book on religious education comes from India, *The Theory and Practice of Christian Education*, by Mr. W. M. Ryburn, M.A. (Milford; 7s. 6d. net). The sub-title is 'with Special Reference to India and the East,' but there is nothing in the book to restrict its sphere of interest and usefulness. As a matter of fact the book is extraordinarily good. Its subject really is the application of psychology to religious teaching. And it is more helpful in this matter than nine-tenths of the popular psychology which is produced in such quantity. For the most part we have given us a deluge of 'popularised' stuff, and we are left to guess what its use can be. But in this book the author stops from time to time to point out just where psychological fact can be, and ought to be, of direct use, and where our religious teaching should come in to meet a situation. The real findings of a sane psychology are dealt with by a man who knows the ground and is not led away by crazy generalizations. It would be difficult to name a book which is more really 'on the spot,' or one in which the teacher would find so much practical guidance.

The idea in *Brief Introductions to the Lessons for Sundays and Holy Days according to the New Lectionary*, by the Bishop of Truro (S.P.C.K.; 4s. net), is a good one. The Bishop of London said that he would never forget the extraordinary attention he used to get in Bethnal Green to every lesson by giving a little introduction in a simple way before it was read. Dr. Hunkin has adopted this idea and has compiled a set of very brief explanations to be given before the reading

of the lessons. It is a good idea, but more could be made of it than is made here. The introductions are too short and contain too little information. But others may be guided along this path and improve on the example.

A book that will interest ecclesiologists and all who are curious about liturgies and their history is *The Norwegian Rite*, by the Rev. Henry Holloway, D.D. (Stockwell ; 8s. 6d. net). We have the translation of the present Norwegian altar-book, and a history of the service books and forms. An enormous amount of labour and research must have been expended on both translation and history. The author cherishes the hope that his work will advance the cause of Christian re-union. And certainly, if that cause is promoted by a truer knowledge of the faith and practices of kindred churches, this hope is sure to be fulfilled. But the work in itself has merits that will commend it to many who care more for the kind of information here provided than for any wider or vaguer interest. It is an admirable example of conscientious and intelligent research, and is well worth the degree it gained for its author.

Pacifism has an ardent and consistent advocate in the Rev. Leyton Richards, who has followed his book, 'The Christian's Alternative to War,' with another—*The Christian's Contribution to Peace* (S.C.M. ; 4s. net, in paper covers 2s. 6d. net). To Mr. Leyton Richards, Pacifist and Christian are identical (p. 15); nationalism (distinguished from nationality) is very much what used to be meant by jingoism; and the great Wars of Independence were a mistake—that under Cromwell, that of the Scottish Covenanters, the rising under Garibaldi, and even the American war under Lincoln. No one will question the courage of any one who takes such a view of history. The author's attitude to the proposal to have an international police force under the control of the League of Nations to restrain and coerce a wrong-doing nation is less consistent. No Pacifist could enlist in it, but after all it is half a loaf, and it would be (to change the metaphor) 'a striking and significant step towards the realisation of a Christian world order.' This is in accord with Mr. Leyton Richard's conviction that Pacifist and non-Pacifist may work together for world peace. There is a very earnest spirit in this book.

Science and Religion, by Mr. N. Bishop Harman, M.B., B.Ch. (Allen & Unwin ; 5s. net), is a somewhat more comprehensive title than the very moderate

size of this book warrants. So far as it goes it is excellent. We have here some reflections of a medical man on the influence of modern science on religious thought. After a brief introductory chapter on the signs of the times three main topics are discussed—God, Man, and the Promises of Religion. Under the last heading there is some discussion of the problems of prayer, miracles, freedom, forgiveness, and immortality. The general character of the book is pleasantly discursive with little close reasoning or rigorous thought. In treating of development the writer seems to confuse similarity of structure with identity of origin, and classes together as examples of evolution the acorn developing into the oak and the boxkite into the seaplane. In general he is an orthodox Darwinian of a religious turn of mind, who does not appear to realize that the problem set by Darwin is so far yet from being settled that it has become much more complex since Darwin's day. The book is written in an attractive style and with a wealth of apt illustration.

An Impossible Parson, by Mr. Basil Martin, M.A. (Allen & Unwin ; 5s. net), is a sort of spiritual biography. The writer began his ministry in the Congregational Church and ended as a Unitarian minister. He accurately describes his own disposition when he says: 'Some are born with a silver spoon in the mouth. I was born with a note of interrogation.' Without much intellectual depth and without sufficient opportunity for systematic study he seems to have suffered his mind to be overrun by a rabble of doubts. During his active days he must have been somewhat of a 'fretful porcupine,' now in the serenity of age he reviews the past without bitterness and with a very kindly eye. In recording his experiences of East-end work he is candid enough to say, 'the message I had to give was useless in Soho.' Altogether he is a typical child of the end of the nineteenth century, born of the clash between old-fashioned orthodoxy and modern criticism. One cannot but regret that so earnest a soul did not find a surer anchorage.

'You are the last of a long line. Your brother who died in India was the fourth generation of missionaries, from father to son, who for one hundred years worked on the Mission Field, first in the West, and then in the East.'

The Rev. Henry M. Bleby, B.A., tells the story of the four generations of missionaries—he himself being the third generation—to his daughter in *The Fourth Generation*. It is a very easily read

book, containing many stories of missionary adventure, and it should be welcomed by boys and girls. The publishers are the Epworth Press, and the price is 3s. 6d. net.

A remarkably cheap little book of children's sermons has been published by Messrs. A. H. Stockwell, Ltd. There are twenty sermons, and the price of the book is only 2s. 6d. net. The author is the Rev. Stanley Luke, and the title is taken from the first sermon, *A Run-away Horse*. We quote the second half with some abbreviations.

'The horse came towards me again. What could I do? I twisted about swiftly and flung up my hands to the bridle. Then I hung on. It carried me a yard or two and then the horse pulled up with an alarming slipping of hoofs and stood still, panting.

'A week later I found myself in a big room where a great company of people were, and one man in particular. He had a very important looking face and a gold chain around his neck and a star on his chest, and he was about to pin a medal on mine for bravery and . . .

'Oh! I am so sorry. That is all wrong. About the crowd of people and the important man and the medal. That is how it ought to have been, perhaps, but my imagination ran away with me just then. What really happened was just this. As the horse came for me when I swerved to get away from it I managed to run into a little back lane and the crazed beast went careering madly along the road to be stopped at last by locking its wheels in a lamp-post. As for me, I went down that back lane feeling a most hopeless coward. All the way home I was telling myself that it is only asking for trouble to try to stop a run-away horse when one doesn't know a single thing about horses, but all the same I felt pretty awful about it.

'That, I thought, would be the end of it. But I had been seen, and the man who saw me came in later in the day to "twit" me about it. I got very angry and shouted at him and wanted to know why he hadn't stopped the thing? Then, very suddenly, I told him I was sorry I had got so angry—that was another run-away horse that I had a lot of anxiety about. There are all sorts of them, you know. Anger is one, lying is another, stealing is a third.'

The Modern Missionary (S.C.M.; 1s. 6d. net) is 'a study of the human factor in the missionary enterprise in the light of present-day conditions.' The writers are all missionaries of experience, and each gives a brief and pointed summary of the tasks

to be faced and the best methods of approach to these tasks. It is impossible here to give the details of these papers, but let it be said with emphasis that they should be closely studied by all who in the various churches have the oversight of the missionary enterprise. They should also be read and pondered both by those who believe in missions and by those who do not—by the former that their interest and sympathy may be more intelligently guided, and by the latter that they may learn how vast and varied the missionary enterprise is, and with how great zeal and prudence it is being carried on.

Books on the Sermon on the Mount are almost innumerable and many are of great excellence. But there still appears to be room for more, for the sermon itself is an inexhaustible mine, and its precepts have a fresh application to every new social system as it arises. *The Beatitudes in the Modern World*, by the Rev. Morgan Watcyn-Williams, B.A. (S.C.M.; 3s. 6d. net), has considerable merit as an exposition, and it has in addition this probably unique distinction that it is dedicated to the members of a church 'ninety per cent. of whom are out of work.' To this unfortunate people the writer bears a fine tribute. 'None of them believes that his poverty is the will of God, or socially necessary. Most of them are convinced that it could even now be ended if the will were here. They are patient and forbearing, but their faith is no "opium of the people." They choose to suffer with Christ, instead of pursuing the will-of-the-wisp of revolutionary talk. Their main concern is with their children, and the tragedy of the adolescent life around them. Old miners often say that they could face an impoverished future cheerfully, if only they could see their boys and girls at work, building up a community that is worth while.' The writer believes that the 'community worth while' must be based on the law and spirit of Christ. This is distinctly a book for the times, earnest, sane, and eminently helpful.

The Certainty of the Gospel, by the Rev. William C. Robinson, D.D. (Zondervan; \$1.00), is the product of a clear and undivided mind. The writer regards religious certainty as 'the lost chord in Protestantism,' and he strikes that chord with a vigorous hand. The certainties upon which he dwells are those of a divine revelation, of Christ, of grace, of justification by faith, and of God's love and care. He writes with passionate conviction, and he illustrates and commends his

teaching by quotations drawn from many fields. One notes here and there misprints and slight inaccuracies in quoting. But these are of little moment in comparison with the solid qualities of the book. Many readers will be surprised to find how strong a case can be made out for evangelical Calvinism, and one would venture to hope that this book may have some influence in leading to a fresh consideration of the lofty themes of which it treats.

The Supreme Sacrifice of Christ, by the Rev. William Francis Berger, D.D. (Zondervan; \$2.00), is a book full of good things. Its aim is to show that the vicarious element is dominant in the whole life and death of Jesus Christ. The writer has

read very widely and meditated long on his theme, until it has come to possess him heart and soul. Indeed, he has very little sympathy with the doubter and little understanding of his doubts. In consequence he does not present a reasoned argument, but his book is of the nature of a *tour de force*. It reminds one of what Horace says about Pindar surging along like a mountain torrent swollen with rain. It looks as if it should sweep away doubts like straws, yet one feels that probably it will not. In a word we have here a book which will be a rare feast to those already convinced, which will confirm their faith by its utter assurance, but which is not likely to carry conviction to those who do not see eye to eye with the writer, and who prefer to move with more caution in their thinking.

Some Outstanding New Testament Problems.

VII. John the Baptist and the Origins of Christianity.

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IN spite of the obvious importance of John the Baptist for an understanding of the origins of Christianity, he still remains a strangely enigmatic figure. The New Testament integrates John within the Christian gospel and definitely subordinates him to Jesus. He is merely 'a voice in the wilderness' crying, 'Prepare the way of the Lord'; this task accomplished he fades from the scene; after his baptism of Jesus he appears in the Gospels only incidentally; in Acts he is mentioned only to stress the imperfection of his baptism compared with the full Christian rite; by Paul he is never alluded to at all. Does the historical truth really correspond to this Christian tradition? Or must more weight be given to the indications, implicit in the N.T., and more explicit in the extra-canonical evidence, that John's work possessed a far greater independent importance and produced much more lasting results than our Gospel records suggest?

I. *The Extra-canonical Evidence*.—With the New Testament picture in our minds, and holding it for the moment in reserve, we may glance first at the extra-canonical evidence, which virtually reduces itself to (a) the testimony of Josephus, who in his *Antiquities* (xviii. v. 2) refers to John in a passage of which the following are the important

sentences: 'Herod had slain John—a good man who bade the Jews to cultivate virtue by justice towards each other and piety towards God and to come to baptism (or rather "come together by baptism," βαπτισμῷ συνιέναι); for immersion, he said, would only appear acceptable to God if practised, not as an expiation for specific offences, but for the purification of the body, when the soul had already been thoroughly cleansed by righteousness. Now when men flocked to him . . . Herod feared that the powerful influence which he exercised over men's minds might lead to some form of revolt. . . . And so, through Herod's suspicions, John was sent as a prisoner to the fortress of Machaerus and there put to death.' (Translation from Thackeray, *Josephus the Man and the Historian*, 131.) In what ways, if any, does this modify the traditional picture?

First, there is a different view of John's baptism. In the Gospels it is preparatory, the sign of repentance indeed, but only 'with a view to' a future 'forgiveness of sins' (Mk 1⁴), which would be sealed by a higher baptism at the hands of Messiah not merely with water but 'with Holy Spirit' (Mk 1⁸). In Josephus, as in Mark, John's baptism has no saving virtue, no sacramental efficacy in