

doctrine will have no meaning; but there will be many more for whom it will release a spiritual light far more effective than any appeasement of the black-out regulations. The doctrine of love, prayer and the spiritual life is set out in the sturdy objectivity of the pre-Reformation times and with a modern spontaneity which gives it a universal appeal. There is no carping or fussy note; self is to be forgotten and even the faults of other selves are to be tolerated. Even the Pharisees—the perennial, narrow-minded, ‘pious’ folk—are accepted: “Such people fulfil an important function in purifying by their persecutions those who are really following Christ, and no doubt Divine Providence has them under His care for most of their mistakes are well meaning.” Without burking the difficulties the author in this tranquil spirit shows how simple is the call and the way to sanctity. C.P.

EZECHIEL. By Dom Hubert van Zeller, O.S.B. (Sands, 7s. 6d.).

In a recent editorial, Blackfriars welcomed the call of Pope Pius XII. to return for inspiration in prayer and the spiritual life to the books of Sacred Scripture. For the same reason, it should welcome Dom van Zeller’s book on Ezechiel, written with the intention of making perhaps the most obscure of the major prophets intelligible and interesting to the general reader. Dom van Zeller obviously has sympathy with his subject, and feels at home with Ezechiel, so that he can treat the prophecy in a gay and cavalier manner, emphasizing what he feels to be important, and boldly dismissing other passages as “not very interesting.” He brings in a lot of practical comments and advice on the spiritual life, and indulges in convincing intuitions concerning Ezechiel’s possible reactions to his wife’s death, and the manner of his own death, which are good reading even though the historical facts may be to some extent hidden from our eyes. Personal touches such as the footnote on page 103 would be of particular interest to Dom van Zeller’s friends. A.V.W.

BELIEF AND REASON. By M.C. D’Arcy, S.J. (Burns Oates: 5s.).

Fr. D’Arcy’s broadcast talks in the autumn of 1942 covered the reasonableness of belief in general, the validity of reason, and the place in reason in religion generally and in christianity in particular. They are printed here with additional chapters on special, and specially common, reasons for agnosticism, and on an ‘argument for unbelief’ presented by the editor of the *New Statesman*. One could wish that this last had been published separately as a pamphlet, for it is as valuable as it is engaging; whereas it must be confessed that the rest of the book, as a whole, does not fulfil one’s expectations: in spite of the valuable matter it contains, it does not seem to represent the author at his brilliant best, and its multiplication of introductions and appendices gives it an untidy patch-work atmosphere, the change-over in style from talk-form to book-form is incomplete, and there are occasional obscurities.

In the discussion of Tyrell's view it is a pity that the fact (so revelant to present-day difficulties) that we believe not in a creed but through a creed is not brought out more strongly. And on p. 85 a sentence seems to suggest that you may commit a positive action which your conscience tells you to be sinful, if the alternative means allowing, negatively, a greater evil to take place. G.V.

THE OBEDIENCE OF A CHRISTIAN MAN. By Edgar P. Dickie. (S.C.M. Press: 6s.).

It is a far cry from Tyndale to Dickie, from the kingly tyranny which was of such comfort to Henry VIII to the call to godly obedience which so many moderns will find uncomfortable. There is a world of thought in this little book, Christian values, reason and belief, grace and nature, animism, positivism, most of them but half thought out and dealt with all too summarily. The main theme is the obedient will as the organ of the knowledge of God: worship and obedience give the attitude which is the pre-condition of such knowledge. The author quotes often and fully from Kierkegaard "objections against Christianity come from insubordination and unwillingness to obey."

He does not however make it very clear to whom or to what this obedience is due—to God, directly speaking to man's soul—to the Bible—to the Church as the mouthpiece of God. He declares that no one possesses absolute authority over man except Christ Jesus His Lord. Yet conscience alone is to be distrusted (p. 83). He dislikes St. Ignatius' unquestioning belief in the Church, and seems unaware that St Ignatius regarded the Church as a divine institution. Yet he admires the unquestioning obedience of military discipline.

Perhaps the best chapter is that on religion and action, in which he shows that action has been characteristic of religion from the beginning (a moot question on which he joins issue with Fraser). Rightly he speaks of the Christian's responsibility of attacking injustice wherever it appears; of the Church's attitude to unemployment "which strikes at the dignity of man *as a child of God*." It is a pity that he does not develop the thesis on the reconditioning of German youth. This needs saying, and might well have been said at the expense of the anecdotes and political quotations with which the book is too amply larded.

As a whole it lacks *thew and sinew*. It lacks above all a final definition of the Church more comprehensive than the 'Colony of Heaven' proposed by the author. E. PULLEN.

PRAYER AND THE SERVICE OF GOD. By Daniel T. Jenkins. (Faber: 5s.).

This is a stimulating and readable examination of the grounds or reasons for prayer rather than an analysis of prayer itself. The four key words are God, the soul, the Bible and the Church. It is refreshing to find a theologian of the classical Protestant school laying such stress on the part played by the Mystical Body