

OBITER

THE ESTRID DANE CLINIC. It can be truthfully said that never were the needs of the handicapped, and especially of handicapped children, so generously recognized as they are today. But the very multiplication of the agencies of the Welfare State can create a fresh problem—that of rigidity of control. The monolithic structure of the health services is not easily able to allow for the unexpected.

And the clinic established in London by Mrs Estrid Dane for the treatment of children suffering from almost every imaginable kind of defect is very unexpected indeed. At a recent demonstration, given before a gathering of doctors and social workers, Mrs Dane gave moving proof of the success of her methods. She starts with the radical assumption that the physical and the mental and spiritual aspects of defect can never be separated. Thus she never treats a physical symptom—for instance a deformity or paralysed limb—in isolation. Her aim is to make the child realize that he can do a great deal to help himself, to provide his own compensation for a lack or a lessening of function. And it is that trust in his own power, in his own capacity to transcend a limitation, that Mrs Dane seeks to induce in a child. She is indeed a living confirmation of what St Thomas tells us a teacher should be: namely one who enables the pupil to bring into action that which is potentially there. The teacher cannot give to the pupil something that is lacking—a new brain or a new leg. But he can bring even the most flickering sign of vitality into strong life through showing the child the process of learning; from the known to the unknown, from the simple exercise to the more developed and confident use of his functions.

All this is implicit in Mrs Dane's work, and her loving respect for the wholeness of a child's personality is really the secret of her astonishing success with, by this, so many hundreds of children. It was immensely moving to see the unselfconscious ease with which spastic or crippled children went through the simple but constructive exercises which Mrs Dane has devised as the physical pattern of her treatment. And afterwards one saw photographs of the children as they were when they first came to the clinic—so often not merely crippled in body, but imprisoned in their minds and hearts.

It would be a sad thing if Mrs Dane's work were to die with her. Its value is incontestable, and is increasingly recognized by surgeons and children's specialists. But it fits into none of the scheduled categories. One feels that perhaps the categories themselves should be extended to include a work of such proved and of such Christian worth. One says

'Christian' advisedly, for the Estrid Dane clinic is an eloquent protest against a mechanical view of man's nature. It is only when human nature is seen in its wholeness that any failure of function can be really cured. I.E.

REVIEWS

BELIEF AND UNBELIEF SINCE 1850. By H. G. Wood. (Cambridge University Press; 12s. 6d.)

Dr H. G. Wood, a veteran Christian scholar, sets out in these Lectures, a series given in Cambridge in 1953 under the auspices of the Faculty Board of Divinity in the University, to contrast the climate of opinion in religious belief a hundred years ago with that now prevailing. To this end he examines the bearing of some of the movements of thought among the philosophers, historians, scientists and theologians which have led to the marked change in the general religious outlook which began to set in in the latter half of the nineteenth century. The result is a deeply interesting analysis of belief and unbelief, and the causes underlying both lines of development; an analysis which has a special appeal to one who knew Cambridge in the early nineteen hundreds.

Dr Wood writes from personal experience over a long lifetime of conflicting tendencies of thought, and personal knowledge of many of the leaders on either side who were affected by them. He ends, in his last chapter, on a note of hope that the long quest of the critics for the Jesus of history is indeed at last proving a means of bringing men face to face with the Christ of Faith.

The emphasis throughout these lectures is on Anglican and Free Church belief; Catholicism is mentioned only incidentally. Points of particular interest are the controversy over eternal punishment which resulted in F. D. Maurice's dismissal from King's College, the evolution of Christian thought in regard to theories of the Atonement, and the new approach to the study of the Bible initiated by Jowett's contribution to *Essays and Reviews*. The change of outlook in regard to everlasting punishment had its origin perhaps in a corresponding doubt in men's minds as to whether the exclusive insistence upon retributive justice involved in crude substitutionary theories of atonement did not make of God something approaching a vindictive despot. The correspondence between Maurice and F. J. A. Hort, to be found *in extenso* in Hort's *Life* by his son, is well worth reading if only in order to realize the deep sense of responsibility with which the discussion was undertaken and the desire it shows to remain faithful to Scripture and traditional belief. Light is thrown upon the imaginative difficulties felt by many by Maurice's confession that after long reflection he was coming