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BOOKS AND THEIR WRITERS.

THE Bishop of Norwich has issued a volume of sermons which should prove of special interest to members of the Anglican Communion throughout the world. The Mother Church of the Anglo-Saxon race has helped to mould the peoples of the Empire, and in *The Church and English Life* (Longmans Green & Co., 4s. 6d. net) the Bishop presents those special characteristics of our race which are based upon the interpretation of Christian faith and practice of our National Church. As Master of Wellington the Bishop gained an insight into our English education upon which the national character so largely depends, and we have here the important conclusions at which he has arrived. The influence of the Church upon the development of our national and civic institution has been so extensive as to produce an association of a unique character. These associations are dealt with in a series of sermons grouped under the heading "The Church and the Nation." Sections are also devoted to "Doctrine in the Church of England" and to "Worship" in which the teaching of our Church as tested by Holy Scripture, and our worship as preserving the essentials of New Testament simplicity are clearly stated. He foresees a danger that the Church may become "too much the Church of the clergy," and that the clergy may become a priestly caste away from the main stream of national life. The laity have always had a considerable influence for good upon the life of the Church, and we hope they will still continue to exercise it.

Dr. Harold Smith, of St. John's Hall, Highbury, has collected a large quantity of useful information from ancient records and other sources, and has published it under the title *The Ecclesiastical History of Essex under the Long Parliament and Commonwealth* (Benham & Co., Colchester, 15s.). Although the volume will appeal particularly to the church-people of Essex, it contains much of interest for all who study the past history of the Church. It gives a useful insight into the conditions which must have prevailed at the period in many parts of the country. The contents are so varied it is difficult to give any adequate account of the mass of detail represented. Some of the events of the years preceding the immediate period covered are given to illustrate the movements culminating in the Commonwealth. Particulars are given of the changes in the ministry of a large number of parishes and the methods by which they were effected. The effects of the Commonwealth legislation are shown, and events connected with the ejections and re-admissions at the Restoration. The human interest is maintained throughout in the details of incidents in the lives of the clergy and their wives. Dr. Smith has provided a storehouse for students, and we anticipate that the parishes in Essex will be glad to secure a copy of a history that tells of an interesting period of the past. Dr. Smith's research work is well known and his accuracy is thoroughly reliable.

Three Hebrew Prophets and the Passing of the Empires, by Charles Venn Pilcher, D.D. (Religious Tract Society, 6s. net), is a study of Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah. The attention devoted to the study of Old Testament history in recent times gives an increased value to any work upon the Minor Prophets which helps to a better understanding of their age and the conditions of the times in which they lived. Dr. Pilcher, in his office as Professor of the Old Testament at Wycliffe College, Toronto, has the advantage of interpreting to students the books of the Old Testament, and in this volume we have the benefit of his experience. The historical part is clearly indicated. Each prophet's characteristics and his message are stated with full appreciation of their value, and the devotional bearing of the prophetic utterances presented in a way that will specially appeal to preachers and teachers. Full use is made of the latest sources of information.

Those who have read Professor Rudolf Otto's well-known work, *The Idea of the Holy*, which was published a few years ago and aroused so much interest in the numinous element in religion, will be interested in the volume of *Religious Essays: A Sequel to "The Idea of the Holy,"* which has been translated by Brian Lunn and published by the Oxford University Press (7s. 6d. net). The opening essays deal with the idea of Sin and explain "What is Sin?", "The Battle between the Flesh and the Spirit," "The Christian Idea of 'Lostness,'" and "The Religious Idea of Original Guilt." A Study of Isaiah's Experience of God illustrates its numinous character. A novel interpretation of "The Lord's Supper as a Numinous Fact," emphasises the central thought of the service as Golgotha, embracing the redeeming and atoning work of the Cross. A form of Service for celebrating the Lord's Supper is intended to bring out these central ideas. The second series of essays are entitled the "Science of Religion," and deal with Schleiermacher, the "Wholly Other," "A Universal Religion?" and "Darwinism and Religion." Two Appendixes contain appeals, one for a Central Council of United Protestantism throughout the world to study the problems and meet the attacks of the day; the other is an Inter-Religious League to unite all religions for purposes of human welfare.

Messrs. W. Heffer, of Cambridge, publish a little devotional book by Dr. A. H. McNeile, formerly Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Dublin. The title is *Self* (2s. net), and it provides suitable subjects for self-examination in regard to the constant emergence of self-assertion even in Christian work.

G. F. I.