

tion would accrue to our Church! I do beg our Evangelical leaders, Chairmen of Committees, and Secretaries, to take this plea with the utmost seriousness as a matter of urgency and incalculable opportunity: lay aside routine, get down to study, draw up policy, back it all first by prayer and then by "pushing" the Resolutions in publications, bulletins, speeches, sermons, conferences, and all other means; and let us see a great forward movement, all based (as the whole Report is based)—on the Bible, and all guided, controlled, and—we may be sure—blessed by the Holy Spirit of God. DOUGLAS F. HORSEFIELD.

The Defence and Confirmation of the Gospel

BY THE REV. J. A. MOTYER, M.A.

Some Comments on a new I.V.F. Series

SERIES? The word is taken from a notice which appears without fail on the back of five recently published books: "Other Titles in this Series." It is an act of faith in the publisher to incorporate it in the sub-title. If they are a series, what principle unites them? The answer is not too evident. The binding is uniform, but in content the books range from a workmanlike statement of elementary Christian truths (*Basic Christianity*, by J. R. W. Stott, 3/6) to some conference addresses which retain every mark of their oral origin (*Authority*, by D. M. Lloyd-Jones, 3/-); from a welcome but largely unaltered reprint of mixed apologetic and evangelism (*Why Believe?*, by A. Rendle Short, 3/-) to a hop-skip-and-jump history of the Church up to the time of Billy Graham (*The Story of the Church*, by A. M. Renwick, 4/6); and amongst these—a strange companion, for it dwarfs them all by its stature and significance—a classic statement of the Evangelical Doctrine of Holy Scripture ("*Fundamentalism*" and *the Word of God*, by J. L. Packer, 4/6). Certainly the more modest claim, "Uniform with this book," would be more appropriate than "Other Titles in this Series". However, the writer of a composite review is bound to do his best, and a reference to Lightfoot's comment on Philippians i. 7 justifies the application of St. Paul's words, in one respect or another to the titles before us.

"I am not sure that apologetics has not been the curse of evangelical Christianity for the last twenty or thirty years," writes Dr. Lloyd-Jones (p. 14) in the course of making the valuable point that it is so easy for the Church to mistake pre-evangelism for evangelism, and to spend so much time showing how reasonable a thing Christianity is that it forgets to proclaim "Jesus Christ, and Him crucified". Without doubt, the two books of the series which verge towards apologetics have escaped this just censure. Neither J. R. W. Stott nor Rendle Short has any interest in apologetics except in order to prepare men

for the challenge of the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the reprinted *Why Believe?* Rendle Short lives before us again. Even those who knew him all too briefly must have remarked on his direct manner. There were no superfluous words in his conversation, and there are none in this tightly written and impressive little book. The first seventy pages deal with the basic topics, Why believe in God? Why believe in Jesus Christ? and What shall we think of the Bible? In these he fulfils the promise of the Preface to avoid small, superficial problems and to carry the discussion to the heart of the matter. Oddly enough, he seems less at home while using his wide scientific knowledge in relation to establishing belief in God's existence, than in marshalling Biblical evidence in the next two chapters. It may be that, in order to make the case appear in its strength, there is not a sufficiently explicit statement of its inherent limitations. The conclusion is drawn (p. 24) that all lines of naturalistic evidence—cosmogony, the inorganic and organic world, beauty, human intuition, history—do not add up to "the Christian idea of God". But the undiscerning might think that the author fancied them to add up to a proof of the existence of a God of some sort. The chapter would be strengthened by a frank statement that not even the existence of God is capable of rational demonstration but must rest on other grounds. This would have given greater force to the evidence for the fact of Christ, on which the rest of the book is built. In its assertion of the authenticity of the Gospel Narratives, and of the inescapable historical challenge of the Lord Jesus Christ, this book argues from a position of great strength, which is increased rather than diminished by the succeeding chapters where the discussion enters upon moral problems, the facts of sin (Is God satisfied with us?) and the Atonement.

Though it is only ninety-five pages long, Rendle Short's book leaves an impression of vigour: a steady stream of thought. Stott's *Basic Christianity*, by contrast, reminds one of a building. It proceeds as one storey of evidence rises above another, until a complete edifice of Christianity is set before the reader, and the question arises, quite naturally, "What must we do, then?" The author admits (p. 7) that the book is intended for those who are "thoughtfully enquiring into the truth and application of Christianity", and the style and mode of presentation certainly demand diligence and thought on the part of the reader. It would not be true to call the book dull; it would not be honest to avoid the word "solid". "God," says the writer, "has no interest in ecclesiastical dilettantes" (p. 16), and, we might add, such people will find Mr. Stott too much for their superficial palates! After an initial chapter in which he asserts the need for revelation, and the response and diligence required in the face of the Biblical word, we are faced straightaway with "the historic Person of Jesus of Nazareth", for "take Christ from Christianity and you disembowel it". It will be seen, then, that this book shares with *Why Believe?* a common starting point. Because of its sheer weight of evidence, however, it goes beyond the more modest target of Rendle Short, and would be an excellent sequel in the reading programme of the young Christian. In its way, it forms a good introduction to Christian doctrine for the newly converted, though the fact that the

penultimate chapter is by way of being an evangelistic appeal shows that a slightly different purpose was intended in the first place. However that may be, the young Christian will find much edification on the questions of the Person and Work of Christ, and the nature and consequences of sin. But when the author turns to the positive statement of the new life in Christ, "The Spirit and the Church" rates one meagre and all too generalized chapter, and the book hastens to a weak and unimpressive conclusion which is in marked contrast with its earlier sections. Of course, one must not ask for everything in one book, but, having gone so far and done so well, it is a shame that the author denied himself (or was denied?) another fifty pages in which to assert clearly the doctrine of the Second Advent (at present mentioned but once, and that in the last few lines of the book, p. 144) and to draw out the main lines of Christian ethics which stem from that great expectation. The strength of this book is in the clear and well-established doctrinal affirmations of the first seven chapters; its weakness is its brief, slight, and unformulated statements about the Spirit, the Church, and the Christian life. In view of the author's gifts, one can only assume that this must be explained by an inadequate allocation of space, and hope that further editions of this useful book will be fifty pages longer—even if, in consequence, it must be a shilling dearer.

Some of the ground covered in *Basic Christianity* is traversed again by Dr. Lloyd-Jones. He treats of the theme of "Authority" under three headings: the Authority of Jesus Christ, of the Scriptures, and of the Holy Spirit. Strangely enough, there is the further similarity that he is strong where Stott is strong, and weak where he is weak. The chapters on Christ and the Scriptures are convincing; they assert and establish principles; they deal with the subject; the chapter on the authority of the Holy Spirit is vague, unconvincing, and does not deal with the subject. The material in this book was originally given in three addresses at a Conference of the General Committee of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students, in 1957. It has quite clearly been subjected to no revision to fit it for publication and it bears all the marks of its original delivery. The voice of the speaker is constantly heard, and the mannerisms of the pulpit obtrude on the printed page. Consequently the book is stylistically displeasing. It would certainly have benefited from editorial polishing; also, it would have been well to expand into paragraphs what were probably spoken asides. For example—and this returns us to the original criticism—it may be sufficient in address, when sketching in the background of the final revelation in Christ, to say, "God has also revealed Himself in history," and leave it at that. But one would have thought it both valuable and necessary, when putting the lecture into a more permanent form, to speak more precisely concerning this mode of revelation. Is all history a revelation of God, or only some history? If the latter, how is it discerned? This is a topic of surpassing importance, and the appeal to the alleged voice of the Spirit speaking in historical event has been as mischievous a source of error as any other. It is exactly this that could have been accomplished in the chapter of the authority of the Holy Spirit. Two things detract from this chapter:

first, it is asserted that there is no aspect of authority so neglected to-day as the authority of the Holy Spirit (p. 64), and secondly, the authority of the Holy Spirit is so treated as to suggest that only in revival is His authority fully discerned (e.g., pp. 67-71). Now the first of these seems plainly erroneous. The authority of the Holy Spirit is appealed to on all hands. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that prayer is never made at Church Committees, Diocesan Conferences and the like without an appeal to the Holy Spirit to guide the Church.

Thank God! The Church has not lost the sense of the authority of the Holy Spirit, but it most certainly has lost its bearings on the question of how that authority is exercised, where that authority is expressed, in what ways that authority may be experienced, by what means the voice of the Holy Spirit may be differentiated and recognized. It is on this vital issue that the chapter fails to help. It concerns itself with two main topics: the authority of the Holy Spirit evidenced at times of revival; and the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer and the Church. But, clearly, the work of the Holy Spirit and the authority of the Holy Spirit are two different things. The chapter on the authority of Christ was not a chapter on, nor did it seek to expound, the work of Christ. Now, many will be helped by this clear statement of the work of the Spirit in conversion, sanctification, instruction, and evangelism, but these things do not touch the question of the mode of His authority over the Church. Likewise, the compulsive authority of the Spirit is doubtless experienced uniquely at times of revival, and we ought to pray, as we are urged (p. 93), that such might be the Church's experience in our day, but the practical question is rather the expression of the Spirit's authority in the "ordinary" time, the daily grind. Dr. Lloyd-Jones has assembled all the material for a clear and powerful assertion of the doctrine of the authority of the Spirit, but unfortunately he glides over it and passes to other things. "The Bible suggests . . . that the Holy Spirit normally speaks to us through the Word" (p. 63). If only this concept had been less equivocally stated, and then developed with the weight and acumen evidenced in the two earlier chapters, the book would certainly have spoken to a crying need. It is nothing short of a plague on the Church to-day that it has such a firm hold on the truth of the authority of the Holy Spirit, and has so largely lost its assurance that the authority of the Holy Spirit is, by the Will of God, wedded to the authority and finality of Holy Scripture.

However, we are not left without witness to this essential truth. Dr. Lloyd-Jones' book has this amongst its merits, that it is an excellent preparation for a study of Dr. Packer's magnificent essay, "'Fundamentalism' and the Word of God." Our gratitude to the I.V.F. for making this book so cheaply available is tempered by regret, lest the title, clearly reminiscent of Hebert's recent attempt to restore Conservative Evangelicals to Catholic Truth—"Fundamentalism and the Church of God"—should suggest that Dr. Packer is merely making a reply. This is in no way true. Hebert is certainly answered, but only in the course of a closely argued, positive statement of Evangelical Truth, which, in weight of scholarship, clarity of expression, and pointedness of assertion and application, meets a long-felt need. The

book opens with two chapters which review the current controversy. The main intent is not, however, simply to record a debate, but rather to reach clear definition of terms. Among many valuable points made, one may be singled out as of major importance, both to the book and for general thinking. In his Introduction, Lloyd-Jones noted a modern tendency to suggest that "truth is so great and so marvellous that it cannot be defined and, therefore, that you cannot say definitely that this view is right and that is wrong" (p. 8). He traces this to a failure to agree on an objective authority. Packer notes the same tendency in modern ecumenical theology: "It tells us that the older theology was woefully one-sided in its habit of treating opposing views simply as forms of error; but it is itself no less onesided in its own habit of treating them simply as aspects of truth" (p. 18). Again the failure is in the realm of authority. Failing a true principle of authority, ecumenism treats all possible points of view as "insights" to be shared. Evangelicals are invited both to give and to receive in this common barter of theological merchandise. "But," urges Packer, "the evangelical faith is a systematic and integrated whole, built on a single foundation; and it must be understood and assessed as such." This seems to be a view which Evangelicals themselves have widely lost, and have thus felt able to develop an evangelically oriented syncretism. Dr. Packer's book is a salutary warning and recall.

Space will only allow an indication of the course of the attempt to expose this "single foundation" on which evangelicalism rests as a complete, indivisible whole. First, the problem of authority is raised; three views, evangelical, traditionalist, and subjectivist, are examined; the existence of an authoritative written Word of God is shown to be of the substance of Biblical faith; and the teaching of Christ, the apostles, and the early Church is outlined, showing that by the teaching of Christ and the apostles, and from then onwards, the principle of authority could be formulated thus: "What Scripture says, God says; and what God says in Scripture is to be the rule of faith and life in His Church" (p. 73). The next three chapters are the core of the book. It is argued, and proved, that Scripture teaches a doctrine of Scripture; that, since it is "fundamental to the nature of faith to take God's word for things; acceptance on the authority of God is the biblical analysis of faith on its intellectual side" (p. 117), we are as much bound to accept in faith the Bible doctrine of Scripture as we are the Bible doctrine of the Trinity or the Incarnation; and that the only truly rational and scientific approach to Scripture is in terms of its own presuppositions and not of ours; criticism of blank verse for not rhyming would be recognized as irrational and unscientific; equally it is unscientific to come to Scripture on the assumption that it errs, if its own testimony is that it does not. Faith and reason do not clash; but believing and unbelieving reason do. The Christian is not called upon to cease thinking, but to start thinking by bringing every thought into captivity to Christ.

It will readily be seen that one has only been able to scratch the surface of this book. It is to be hoped, nevertheless, that this review has whetted the appetite of readers, and encouraged them to believe that even in these days treasure is sometimes available under a modest

exterior, and for an outlay of 4/6. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for the remaining member of this issue. The most that can be said for Renwick's *Story of the Church* is that, in the total extent of it, it may serve to demonstrate the pitfalls that await a Church which departs from the touchstone of Scripture : the brief record of history illustrates Packer's thesis. Professor Renwick was set an impossible task—Church History in 200 pages ! The result is a book of stark contrasts : good men and bad men ; but the subtler shadings of human character and situation are lost. In consequence, those who know their Church History will be moved, time and again, to say, " Well, really it was not quite like that. Righteousness was not all on one side." Those who have no such knowledge are in real danger of reaching wrong conclusions, or making wrong assessments of the issues involved. In the visible Church, as we know, the good is ever mingled with the bad and, presumably, the same must apply to every series of books that ever was !

The Pastor's Policy on Worldliness

BY THE REV. R. C. CRASTON, B.A., B.D.

IT is very obvious that there is a " split-mind " on the subject of " worldliness " among Evangelicals of all denominations in this country. There are two main schools of thought.

1. Those who claim to maintain and teach the rigid line of *total abstention* from those things classed as " worldly ".

2. Those who claim to practise and teach *discrimination* in such matters. If the former is the rigid policy, this, for want of a better word, is a " liberal " policy.

The Minister of Christ, seeking to be a true Pastor to his flock, finds himself in the midst of these conflicting opinions. Let us suppose he encourages his young people to go to a Young People's Holiday Centre or Convention. When they return, he finds them bewildered and even annoyed because someone, speaking apparently with authority, has laid down the law that they *must*, as Christians, give up the cinema, dancing, use of lipstick, etc. The Minister feels in his heart that this policy has been wrong. Yet, he cannot escape the fact that " worldliness " is undermining the spiritual life of many of his people, both young and old. He sees the effect of TV. on this family, of dancing on this young couple, and so forth. He feels an instinctive dislike of the rigid line of laying down the law, and yet he often feels tempted to take it, when he sees the effects of " worldliness " on his flock ! If such a state of mind exists, it is no wonder he is not consistent in his policy.

In seeking a sound, consistent policy it is essential to define what the New Testament means by the World. Not a little of the difference of outlook results from failure to do that. The Scriptures make it abundantly clear that the World is a great enemy to growth in the