

words contemporary for us. Old Testament theology is beginning to take account of the results of Form Criticism, as in von Rad's *Theologie des alten Testaments*, and there is promise that the older constructions, too much dominated by the

systematic formulation of systematic theology, may be transformed into patterns more consonant with the literary forms of the Old Testament and the character of Israel's manner of thinking and speaking.

Literature

THE DOCTRINE OF THE MINISTRY

ALL who view with dismay the fecklessness of our divided Christendom in the face of the world's pain will read with eagerness and real profit *The Doctrine of the Christian Ministry* (Lutterworth Press; 25s. net), by Professor John Line, Emmanuel College, Toronto. Deep sincerity and spiritual concern underlie the view of the ministry here presented and it is with the scholar's exactitude and constant appeal to Scripture that this man of prophetic fire has outlined both sides of the debate on questions of form and order. One would fain speculate how it comes about that two men both reared in Methodism, the late Bishop Kirk and Dr. Line, should come to such different points of view. Was it the effect on the one hand of tradition-laden Oxford and on the other of the freshness and realism of the Canadian scene?

With marked fair-mindedness, almost leaning over backwards, Dr. Line describes the Anglican position on Apostolic Succession and then turns to make a twofold criticism. (1) Following Toynbee's distinction between the absolute and the relative in historical study he sees Christianity as owing its *substance* and ultimately its origin to that which was before history, the Divine Word, the constant and essential, beside which other factors are transitory and circumstantial. To make certain orders of ministry indispensable is to ignore the fact that earthen vessels remain earthen though they contain heavenly treasure. (2) With Irenaeus as guide we must regard the Word as regulative: episcopacy is under judgment from the Word as are other ministries. Granted that the order of bishops has the strong sanction, even primacy, of history, it has no superior authenticity beyond that of other ministries.

The excellence of this study is not only or chiefly on its controversial side. The highest of churchmen must feel awe as he reads this portrayal of ministry: its divine origin, the virtue of the offices of the Holy Spirit, the priestly conception Catholic and Reformed, our calling in the gospel. We are arrested as we read: 'Now let the preacher recall his thrusts and retreats in preparing a sermon, how feeble he feels his effort when he is delivering

it, and then consider—if that is convertible into the Word of God, does it not imply supernatural working as truly as anything priesthood may effect at Eucharist or Mass?' Dr. Line will not have it that our Protestant belief in the call of each individual minister annuls the consequence of the Incarnation whereby God inserted Himself within the historical stream. Again and again we are constrained to pause over grave and fresh presentation of such themes as the power of the keys, the meaning of ordination, the awful responsibility of proclaiming the gospel to our age, the need especially of the Protestant minister to 'abide in the vine'. Altogether a book for ordinands, and a standard volume for all who would share in coming conversations on Christian unity.

JOHN DOW

THE SACRAMENTAL LIFE

The Baptismal Sacrifice, by Brother George Every (S.C.M.; 9s. 6d. net), is both a stimulating and an aggravating book. It is stimulating because it brings together a number of theological concepts that are too infrequently associated; it is aggravating because, whereas the author has something of importance to say, he fails to articulate it in a synthesis of the various themes outlined. By the 'Baptismal Sacrifice' he means the complete structure of Christian Initiation, which involves baptism in water, followed, frequently, by a blessing (or confirmation), and culminates in the Eucharist, and his concern would seem to be to illuminate each individual element by relating it to the others. But this relation is assumed rather than demonstrated, so that the separate chapters read like self-contained and almost independent essays.

The first chapter examines rites of initiation and sacrifice on the basis of comparative religion, but this is not integrated with the ensuing argument, apart from a hint in the final chapter to the effect that some such 'dim recognition' of the need for death and rebirth may lie behind the desire of many parents, not practising Christianity, to have their children baptized. The second chapter is a concise and useful history of the baptismal pattern, from the New Testament onwards, to emphasize