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LETTERS ON CHURCH AND RELIGION OF WILLIAM
 EWART GLADSTONE. Selected and arranged by D. C.
 Lathbury. (Murray). 2 vols. 24s. net.

The letters of W. E. Gladstone will not rank as literature. The art of literary letter-writing was lost when the eighteenth century came to a close. Nor have they the sympathetic charm which we find in those of men like Newman and Keble. Gladstone's style is frequently involved and even turgid. And his letters are not individual in the sense of belonging specially to the correspondent to whom they were sent. Gladstone was intent on expressing his own views without much regard for the personality of his correspondent. Mr. Lathbury emphasizes this fact in his preface when he says: "There is at times a curious unlikeness between the letters and the correspondents, so that we are tempted to wonder how much the reader appreciated or even understood of what was sent to him." Nevertheless, these two volumes of letters were worth publishing. They form a necessary appendix to Morley's famous *Life of Gladstone*. That book is probably the ablest of our many modern biographies, but it fails in one respect. The author was temperamentally unfitted to appreciate the religious side of Gladstone. And yet an appreciation of his religion is, in his case, absolutely necessary to the understanding of the man. Gladstone without Gladstone's religion is an insoluble psychological riddle. And the letters have besides their biographical, an intrinsic value. The problems of nineteenth century church life are in these letters treated earnestly by a man of great intellect. The arguments are not always such as we should use now. The presuppositions have changed. This is particularly the case in the letters which deal with unbelief. It would be impossible now to treat *Robert Elsmere* quite as seriously as Gladstone did. We have got beyond the conception of modified theism which the book expressed. Gladstone's apologetic was always a defence of the Christian creed or of some article of the Christian creed. We are now concerned with attacks not on the creed, but on the system. Our question is no longer: Did Christ work miracles? But a much more fundamental one: Did Christ teach righteousness? Yet there is much in Gladstone's method of dealing with the questions of his time which has its value still. He insisted on the importance of the "will to believe." His emphasis at least retains its importance. We are still concerned with the will—the will to be good.

Gladstone's letters on other subjects have a still plainer survival value. His great topic, that which he made peculiarly his own, was the relation between Church and State. Here we have scarcely advanced beyond his thought. The ideal is still the union between the two. We see more clearly than Gladstone's contemporaries, not more clearly than Gladstone himself, that the ideal is one which in the circumstances of our time cannot be realized. We are beginning to see, what Gladstone saw in the middle of the last century, that the business of the Church of England is to prepare for the inevitable separation.

Much of Gladstone's correspondence is occupied with the controversy between the Church of England and the Church of Rome.

This is natural when we consider that Gladstone lived through the period of the secessions which followed the Oxford movement. Never before, since the Reformation, certainly never afterwards, has the position of the Church of England seemed so critical. The controversy itself is, of course, perennial. But it has lost much of its interest now. Modern historical criticism has cut away a great deal of the ground on which the old combatants fought; and it is no longer men of intellectual power and spiritual intensity who leave the Church of England. The modern converts from Anglicanism to Romanism are smaller people, the sentimentalists or the survivors of bygone schools of thought. Much, therefore, of Gladstone's polemic is comparatively uninteresting to us. Yet here and there we come upon passages of striking, almost prophetic power.

"At the present day (1874) the Papal Communion in England is strong with a strength wholly factitious and unnatural, the imported strength of a most remarkable body of seceders. The strength of these men conceals the hollowness of the system, and keeps it in a certain amount of relation to human thought and culture, though from the purely national life it is totally estranged. But it will be impossible for these men to rear up within the present Anglo-Roman Communion successors equal to themselves. Ultramontane as they are, they are essentially hybrid, and there can be no propagation, so that in the next generation, according to all likelihood, not only will all be Ultramontanes, but the intellectual level of English Ultramontaniam itself will have sunk enormously."

The words have proved curiously true. Instead of its galaxy of stars, the Church of Rome in England to-day can boast of no single man of first-rate intellectual power, no great theologian, no philosopher, scarcely a writer who can be ranked as even second-rate in the world of literature. J. O. H.

MEDICINE AND THE CHURCH; being a series of studies on the relationship between the practice of Medicine and the Church's Ministry to the Sick. By various writers. (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co.) 6s. net.

In the compilation of this work the editor has been at great pains and has achieved marked success in soliciting the aid of a body of men who rank among the foremost in the medical and ecclesiastical worlds. Here we find the views of men of sober mind and mature judgement clearly expressed in favour of the co-operation of priest and doctor in restoring to health both mind and body; for, as Sir Clifford Allbutt puts it, "the highest spiritual life depends on the best bodily health."

Many of the writers very justly lay great stress on the fact that the so-called "miraculous cures" of the late Mrs. Eddy and her followers, the Christian Scientists, will not stand the test of a minute scrutiny and investigation by a competent and impartial judge. Throughout the various articles considerable importance is given to the unanimous opinion expressed by those intellectual giants who take part in the proceedings of the Lambeth Conferences, the Harveian Society and the Medical Councils, that no