

amongst its guests was an experience hardly out of the common, who in her later years found herself called upon to entertain the entire French episcopate together at her husband's magnificent château in Passy, certainly required great qualities both of mind and heart to do justice to her environment. This ability to rise to the occasion seems, however, never to have failed her. The secret of her power lay in a mingling of rare self-confidence with rare sympathy. Lady Laura speaks of her sister's "sublime assurance." It is indeed impossible to imagine any situation to which she could have conceived herself unequal. She was entirely sure of herself—both in opinion and in action. Her dogmatism was intense, at least on subjects on which she "held views"; and within these limits (though not beyond them) she claimed a full measure of that "infallibility" which she so resented in Mr. Gladstone after that statesman's precipitous fall from the pinnacle of adoration on which she had once placed him. She was quite frankly a partisan. Once her loyalty was touched, there could be for her but one side to a question. Of shyness she appears to have been incapable even of forming an idea. Her "head-on" attempts to make friends with M. de Franqueville's anti-clerical neighbours at Bourbilly were highly amusing. They seem also to have been surprisingly successful. This self-assurance occasionally led her, indeed, into blazing indiscretions; but one suspects that even out of the most embarrassing situation she would still contrive to emerge with colours flying. A character marked by such combativeness and self-will might easily have been almost repellent if these qualities had not been tempered by others. But in Sophia Palmer's case they were united with a rare capacity for love and unselfish service and with a most profound and ardent spiritual aspiration. She was ever one of the hungry souls. "I do long for more power to love," she wrote to a friend; and her devotion to her mother and father was not far this side of idolatry. Even in the busiest and most brilliant period of her social career she worked assiduously in the slums of London or (with singular success) among the labouring folk of her father's Hampshire estate. She was passionately devoted to the Church of her baptism, and (true daughter of her father) worked indefatigably in its defence through a most critical period of its existence. Her marriage to a devout Roman Catholic husband and rare opportunities of knowing the French Church on its best side never for a moment shook her stanch Anglicanism. This love of the Church no doubt owed something to her intense native conservatism; yet its real root was profoundly religious. Her faith was the very core of her being; and indeed without the discipline which came to her through it, how could her proud, passionate heart ever have been tamed? Suffering, too, was not spared her; yet it only served to purify and strengthen the fine ardour of her soul. Her favourite saint, we are told, was Catherine of Siena. We intend no idle compliment when we say that not a little of the saint's character was reflected in that of her devotee.

A SHORT HISTORY OF EDUCATION. By Professor J. W. Adamson. Cambridge University Press. 1919. 350 pp. 12s. 6d. net.

As the author explains in his Preface, "the history of education is best narrated under national forms, an arrangement which is also convenient for study and indispensable for research." His object is to "set forth briefly the progress of English educational institutions, taking account of such domestic and foreign conditions as have a direct bearing upon English education. All Western education to-day bears the impress of two great powers, the Roman Empire and the Christian Church; and

through these a third power, the intellectual life of Greece, has operated. The fact gives a certain unity to the education of Christendom which is the more striking in times when the various nations were less self-conscious than they are to-day. The earlier chapters . . . are therefore less specifically English than the later. But, beginning with the fifteenth century, the narrative becomes increasingly English in its survey."

This announcement does meagre justice to the broad outlook on European movements which Professor Adamson maintains in dealing with the medieval period, notably in his chapter on the rise of Universities, and again in discussing the influence of the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the conflicts which then and later developed round the principle of religious uniformity. The value of cross-reference appears continually in the survey of secondary and higher education, as also in his study of the genesis of "elementary" instruction, of the English attachment to private enterprise (which owed much, indirectly, to restrictive "Church and State" policies), and of the gradual evolution of "modern" studies, which forms an interesting thread in his narrative. To the three "powers" which have left an impress on Western education may be added a fourth—the pressure of demands for practical training in a broad sense, which finds an early illustration in the antithesis between the "education of chivalry" and the breeding (in school and university) of clerks and "scolares." The transition to modern phases of the problem is suggested in passages dealing with the new philosophy, the claims of the "man of action" which found expression in sixteenth and seventeenth century schemes for aristocratic academies, and the growing influence of the middle and commercial classes, whose private schools have a longer and more instructive history than is generally recognized.

The special merit of the work is the skilful manner in which the author traces the continuity of different forms of organized education in successive epochs and their gradual transformation in response to new influences and conditions. This applies more especially to his descriptions of universities and higher secondary schools. Without concealing their defects he makes it possible to understand how they survived through periods of apparent stagnation and the extent to which reform came from within, and to compare in some measure the work of quasi-public institutions with the results of private enterprise.

In the last chapter, describing the approach to a national system of education since 1870, we may attribute perhaps to the weariness of a conscientious historian certain abrupt transitions which render it difficult to catch the drift at the first reading, and also the somewhat allusive character of his paragraphs dealing with University Extension. Some inner knowledge is required if one is to appreciate the distinction between two kinds of tutorial class suggested on p. 329 by the neat trick of printing the second in capitals. If Professor Adamson were writing two hundred years hence, he would perhaps make more of adult education. He might even discover the existence of public libraries and mention them as institutions characteristic of this primitive age. We hope they will not punish his oversight by boycotting a book which at present stands without a rival.

A. E. DOBBS.

THE VALLEY OF VISION WITH A PREFACE BY THE BISHOP OF EDINBURGH.
Methuen and Co. 3s. 6d. net.

This is an age when "young men see visions and old men dream dreams," some weird and fanciful, and others deep and spiritual. The vapourings of spiritists, so-called messages from souls in Paradise, the ravings of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the visions of the unseen world as