

Irish Church Quarterly

Concerning Prayer: Its Nature, Its Difficulties, and Its Value by Harold Anson; Edwyn Bevan; R. G. Collingwood; Leonard Hodgson; Rufus M. Jones; W. F. Lofthouse; C. H. S. Mathews; N. Micklem; A. C. Turner; B. H. Streeter

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The Irish Church Quarterly, Vol. 10, No. 38 (Apr., 1917), pp. 153-154

Published by: [Irish Church Quarterly](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30067678>

Accessed: 18/06/2014 13:44

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CONCERNING PRAYER—its Nature, its Difficulties, and its Value.

By the Author of "Pro Christo et Ecclesia," Harold Anson, Edwyn Bevan, R. G. Collingwood, Leonard Hodgson, Rufus M. Jones, W. F. Lofthouse, C. H. S. Mathews, N. Micklem, A. C. Turner, and B. H. Streeter. (Macmillan.) 7s. 6d. net.

Prayer is the subject of the day. Before the war, it was possible to become absorbed in other theological problems. To-day the call to Prayer has sounded, and men's thoughts are turned to what, after all, is the life of religion. But the call has met with singularly little response. Intercession services are no longer attended as they ought to be. The fact is, that at the back of most men's minds, there is the feeling that the value of prayer is so questionable that it is not worth while so long as there is other work which must be done.

It is to combat such an attitude that this volume of essays has been published. The writers, who comprise a number of Anglicans, both clerical and lay, a Congregationalist, a Wesleyan, and a Quaker, have been in the habit of meeting together for the discussion of this most important matter, from all its points of view, and the book is the outcome of these conferences. There is, therefore, considerable variety of theme and treatment. The list of contents shows a wide range of subjects, from "God and the World's Pain," to "Prayers for the Dead," and the Anglican view of the Eucharist is followed by the vaguer notions of the Free Churches on the same subject. And yet there is a certain consistency of thought which, in spite of minor disagreements, pervades the volume. The writers have learned much from one another, and in the thoughts they have put forward there is the trace of a common inspiration.

It is often said that in days like these, the Old Testament comes to its own. If this is taken to mean that the sorrows of war are to be regarded as "judgments" or "visitations" sent by an angry God on a guilty world, most of the writers would emphatically deny it. Punishments should light on the guilty party only, whereas the calamities of our day overwhelm both the innocent and the guilty alike. To ascribe the war to Welsh Disestablishment, or the spread of Ritualism in the Church of England, is nonsense. It is the inevitable consequences of all the bad customs and the false ideals which have originated in the heart of man or, if we prefer the expression, it is the work of Satan; it is not the act of God.

And this has an important bearing on prayer, for true and effectual prayer depends upon our having a right conception of God. If prayer is—to quote one definition—"uttered trust" it cannot be directed to a God of Wrath. The words of Bishop Prince Lee to his old pupil, Westcott, are quoted with approval. "People quote various words of the Lord as containing the sum of the Gospel—the Lord's Prayer, the Sermon on the Mount, and the like; to me the essence

of the Gospel is in simpler and shorter terms: *μὴ φοβοῦ μόνον πίστευε.* Confidence, not deprecation, is the mark of true prayer. And this strain runs through the whole book. It attains a crescendo in the essay on "Repentance and Hope," and here, we imagine, certain readers will catch only discords. The writer is especially hard on the type of penitence taught in devotional manuals. If the average man is not thinking at all about his sins, the Christian who follows these models of Catholic piety is thinking far too much. A constant grovelling in the dust is not the best way either to please God, or to overcome sin. Renewal, not retrospection, is the thing. All this is true, but scarcely to the point. Excessive contrition is not the great danger of our time, and while still keeping within the bounds of common sense, the emphasis might well have been laid on the other side.

It is impossible, in the space, to do justice to a book with such a range of subjects. The perplexities which harass the practice of intercession and petition are boldly faced, and although the writers would be the last to claim that they had pierced to the heart of the mystery, they have shed some new light upon it. We should like to see most of the suggestions in the essay on "Worship" for the reform of the liturgy adopted; indeed that essay contains an analysis of worship which, within limits, is exceedingly valuable. The note of awe is hardly so dominant as it ought to be. And the same might be said of the whole book.

R. SCANDRETT.

**THE MINISTRY IN THE CHURCH IN RELATION TO PROPHECY
AND SPIRITUAL GIFTS.** By H. J. Wotherspoon, M.A., D.D.
(Longmans.) 4s. 6d. net.

This book is the outcome of five lectures delivered in the University of Glasgow; it is also, quite evidently, the outcome of the mature reflexion of one who writes, not merely as an ecclesiastic, but as a theologian. It is unconcerned with controversies about episcopal or presbyteral or congregational theories of the ministry; it has nothing of the shilling handbook flavour; it demands the reader's close attention from start to finish; but it will repay a careful study, for it is full of good points and suggestive arguments, besides summarizing an amount of information upon the region of church history which is of supreme importance.

Dr. Wotherspoon's main controversy is with the theory of Twofold Ministry as laid down by Harnack, and practically derived from a combination of Lightfoot and Hatch's theories, together with the newly discovered *Didache*. This, in short, distinguishes a double organization; a ministry charismatic, universal, ambulatory; and a ministry legal, institutional, elective, local and stationary. The