

Church in particular countries and give no corresponding impetus to the rate of conversions. The reason for this cannot be anything in the nature of the Church itself, because we know that there is the same divine life in the Church today as there was in the early Church. To say that the Church has not the same appeal now as it had in the past, because it is no longer new, is to show a lack of real faith in the Church. Modern Catholics attribute to Christ and his Church the weakness which is really in themselves. History shows clearly what is lacking in the Christian life of modern Catholics: there is no need to look for any other explanation. The revival of a real living ecclesiology is probably the most important task facing Catholics today: it is a tremendous work involving the study of theology, canon law, history, liturgy, etc., under the special aspect of the Church.

Canon Leclercq's book is, he modestly claims, only a series of marginal notes to the traditional studies on the Church: it is an attempt to show simply and clearly the best approach to the many questions involved in a modern study of the Church. The whole book is distinguished by remarkably sane and balanced views about questions which usually lead to much extravagant writing. Of particular value are the author's views on such subjects as Unity and Diversity in the Church, "political" Catholicism, the relations between Church and State, the effect of Persecution, etc. His chief concern is to emphasize the fact that the Church is both divine and human, like Christ its founder. Completely to understand the Church would involve understanding the mystery of the Incarnation, which is impossible. The human aspect of the Church, God working in and through men who retain their freedom, is a mystery to us. Only the Church, not as we imagine it, but as Christ made it, is the full realisation of the wonder of God working in and through men.

Canon Leclercq's book cannot be too highly recommended as an invaluable supplement to standard works on the Church, and as an indication of the primary importance of the study of the Church in all Catholic education.

DROSTAN MACLAREN, O.P.

THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH. An address delivered to the Gloucester Conference, Oct. 24th, 1944. By The Rt. Rev. A. C. Headlam, C.H., D.D., Bp. of Gloucester. (Blackwell, Oxford; 2s.).

The most important thing to be said about this small pamphlet is that it is an authoritative exposition of what the ordinary instructed Anglican, who is neither High Church, Low Church nor Modernist, means by the clause which he repeats in the Creed, "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church"; and it is important for us to try to understand this. It is not an easy task because it is never certain that where we use terms in common we are expressing identical concepts.

The discussion of the nature of the Catholic Church is closely bound up with the question of what God has appointed, how He works through His appointed means, and in what sense He is bound by His own appointment: the question in short of Authority and Validity. Almost every line in this pamphlet is evidence that the underlying foundations of these primary questions are not fully explored.

Again, Apostolic Succession, grace and its transmission are current terms both for ourselves and for Anglicans, but there is no security that we mean the same thing by them. There is much in this pamphlet to show, for example, that Bishop Headlam credits the Catholic Church with holding a theory of the transmission of grace by the laying on of hands which appears to involve the handing on of some kind of personal possession, and he remarks that this is not to be found either in the Patristic or Mediaeval period. Nor is it to be found in any other period, for Catholic Theology holds no such fantastic theory which, as the Bishop himself points out, is contrary to the true idea of a Sacrament.

All this goes to show how urgent the need is of theological contact between Catholics, Anglicans and Free Churchmen, in small groups meeting for the purpose of a radical examination of the theological presuppositions underlying their beliefs. A mistake has been made in the recent past of trying to collaborate without any attempt at this radical understanding of each other's positions, and such collaboration is now proving abortive, owing to the misconceptions to which it must of necessity give rise. There is a danger that the whole idea of collaboration will now be abandoned because of this false start. This small book affords ample evidence of the great need for true collaboration.

HENRY ST. JOHN, O.P.

CHURCH CONTINUITY AND UNITY. By H. Burn Murdoch. (Cambridge University Press; 15s.).

UNITY AND REUNION. A Bibliography. By H. R. T. Brandreth. (A. & C. Black; 12s. 6d.).

Dr. Burn Murdoch has written a most attractive plea for Christian unity. He bases his contention on the New Testament doctrine of the Church as sacramental, a reality possessing "a humanly perceptible one-ness". Moreover this "one-ness" is realised not only in the Apostolic Age, but is also clearly evident in the "continuous and unbroken life" of the Church in the world.

Much of the first part of the work is stimulating, but when Dr. Burn-Murdoch begins to deal with particular historical issues and theological problems, his argumentation is less happy and some of his premises seem ill-founded. To take two examples; his treatment of the origin and history of the episcopate is interesting, but far too little attention is given to the data which points to some form of "polyepiscopacy" in the first century. Certainly the in-