

is full of the simple straightforward instruction which may be expected from a good Diocesan Inspector in Ireland.

J.-D. CHEALES, O.P.

THE STORY OF THE PRAYER BOOK. By Verney Johnston and Ernest Evans. (A. R. Mowbray; 3s.6d.)

This is a popular history of the Book of Common Prayer written for Anglicans to mark the fourth centenary of the first English Prayer Book. It is vivid and interesting and gives a fair picture of medieval Catholic worship before the changes took place, and an equally fair estimate of the state of mind of both the priests and the people who accepted the Elizabethan settlement. The authors naturally assume a great deal that Catholics are not prepared to grant, but it seems to us that some of these assumptions are much too facile even for a popular presentation. For instance, they stigmatise the issue of the Book of 1552 as 'a party move which has cost the Anglican Communion years of controversy and may yet permanently destroy its unity and its very *raison d'être* in Christendom'. This is a reference to the fact that the changes made in 1552 were directed against the Real Presence and the sacrificial character of the Eucharist. They regard the Canon of the 1549 Book however as the 'most glorious Eucharistic Prayer' and do not mention that even from this prayer all reference to sacrifice, save one ambiguous one, had been carefully excluded by its compilers so that though it looks superficially very like the Canon of the Roman Mass in English, it proves on close examination (as the liturgiologist Edmund Bishop showed) not merely patent but suggestive of an interpretation quite contrary to traditional Catholic doctrine.

The view thus put forward by implication rather than statement that the reform of the service books in 1549 was no more than the pruning away (admittedly sometimes over-drastring) of the luxuriance of medieval devotion is an assumption that requires a good deal more justification than it is given in this book. H. St J.

THE WHOLENESS OF THE CHURCH. By Oliver S. Tomkins. (S.C.M. Press; 5s.)

The idea of oecumenicity which is the subject of this book is as yet almost entirely alien from the temper of Catholicism as we have inherited it. It is however arguable that today Christendom is faced by a crisis radically different from any that has confronted it in past history, and that a new situation demands a new temper and method of approach to each other on the part of separated Christians. The oecumenical mind may be defined as the mind which, while holding fast to the dogmatic truth which belongs essentially to one's own tradition, yet aims at entering into and understanding the beliefs and practices of other traditions. This is to be done primarily by fellowship; by entering into a relationship of knowledge and love with those who differ from us but owe

allegiance to Christ Jesus as Lord and God. The effect of this fellowship when truly attained is a first hand, intimate understanding, born of supernatural charity, of how others of widely differing background and dogmatic belief think, speak and believe concerning Christ's redeeming work in themselves and the means by which it touches their lives. Such a relationship if real is reciprocal and involves on our part communicating knowledge as well as receiving it. It is a hard and costly process, yet unless divided Christendom is prepared to make the effort it is difficult to see how the human heart is ever to be made fit for the work of Reunion, which must be begun by men but which can only be perfected by the Holy Ghost.

It will be doubted by many whether even if desirable this oecumenical relationship is possible for Catholics since the authority claimed by the Church is unique and absolutely exclusive and would of necessity make the relationship unilateral and consequently ineffective. It is the fear that this exclusiveness might become obscured which is the main ground for the refusal of the Holy See to allow *formal* participation in the so-called oecumenical movement. There still remains however the question of private and individual participation which is sanctioned by the Holy See with due safeguards. A Catholic who wishes to make up his mind about this problem could not do better than begin by a study of this small volume with a view to grasping the nature of oecumenicity and how far a Catholic can have the oecumenical mind. Its great merit is that its author sees the full depth of the problem of the Reunion of Christendom and does not deal with shallow solutions. There is a sense in which his mind may be truly said to be Catholic though he is far from holding the completeness of Catholic truth. On the whole however he understands the Catholic position as clearly as any outsider can understand it, though in the paragraph in which he equates fundamentalism with biblical inerrancy he shows that he has much to learn about the nature and scope of Catholic biblical exegesis.

H. St.J.

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST. By Arthur H. Ryan. (Clonmore & Reynolds; 8s.6d.)

For once a publisher's blurb is a reliable guide. Mgr Ryan's 'introduction to the Church' does 'combine learning and lucidity' and without giving any points away has none of the aggressiveness which so often mars Catholic apologetics. This book sets out its aims clearly—did Christ found a church? what sort of church? where is it today? The one and a half hundred pages which answer these questions are a model of scholarship minus humbug, for although the learning is compressed it is clear-headed. There are excellent two-page summaries of the history of the Greek schism, the Lutheran revolt, John Knox and suchlike subjects. The word scholarship however must not be misunderstood. This is not a book for scholars only; in fact, some