

THE CHURCH AND THE MODERN WORLD. By R. A. Edwards. (Methuen; 3s. 6d.)

The particular value of this book lies in its insistence on the relevance of dogma to society. 'The Word became flesh, and Christ is for all men the means by which they may best see God, the road along which they may best reach Him, and through their union with Christ they shall best find the serenity of a life truly lived.' Christian social teaching and action must be Christian first, so that they depend on what we believe about the Son of God. But there is only one way of guaranteeing that dogma and that is through the Christ-on-earth, who is the Church. The weakness of the book lies here, for the author never defines this primary term. The Church, to whom he constantly refers as 'It,' appears to be a society of men like any other society, with the exception that the ultimate goal is not on this earth. Yet the Church, or Christianity, is said 'Indignantly to sweep aside,' to be 'in an uncomfortable position,' 'to know' this and that, and the Church continues in this vein throughout the book until the reader begins to feel that the Church is no less than the Rev. R. A. Edwards himself. Had the author been less genuinely Christian and eager to preach Christ to the world in distress the result would have been worthless. As it is, some of his points lack the clarity we might expect of the Church of Christ. In his anxiety to justify the positive aims of Communism he is brought to identify 'To each according to his need, from each according to his ability' with the message of the Gospel, selecting as one of the parallels 'By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.' These defects are unfortunate since the book contains several very pertinent points and would otherwise have served to augment the good work done by the Archbishop of Canterbury at the Albert Hall Meeting (September, 1942).

CONRAD PEPLER, O.P.

WHAT THE CHURCH TEACHES. By the Bishop of Bradford. (Penguin Books; 9d.)

This 'war for a Christian way of life' has shown with devastating clarity the absence of any positive Christian belief among large sections of our population. It is not a question merely of religious slackness; far more is it a lack of education in spiritual things and a readiness to accept the facile sophistries of *soi-disant* modern minds which have driven religion from its position in our national life. Any attempt to remedy this by presenting the essential truths of Christianity in a manner which, whilst easily comprehensible by anyone capable of connected thought, does not offend the intellect by its naiveté, can only be commended. When the presentation is made with the skill and scholarship which Dr. Blunt brings to his task, one can feel assured that his book will prove of assured value