

*The Christian Revolution.* By HENRY T. HODGKIN. New York: Geo. H. Doran Co.

HERE is a *book!* It is one of the few a preacher simply must have to keep timed to thought. This is the seventeenth of "The Christian Revolution Series" put out by English Quakers who are incurably addicted to basic thinking. Not a book in all this series is unworthy of a place on a preacher's shelves. In such a constellation of excellence comparisons are odious. But if this book is not the best, it is surely one of the best, and *the* one of them all needed most just now. Other studies in social progress have made much of a stir. Ellwood's *Reconstruction of Religion* was widely read and deserved the reading it got. But there was something aloof and chilling about the presentation Ellwood made. Not so with Hodgkin's. There is fire in his pen. He is a lover of men and is not ashamed of it. His book can be easily outlined. It yields a rich

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harvest of sermon material; so much of it, indeed, that reading it means running the risk of involuntary plagiarism. If any writer outlines his chapters with greater clarity we have not heard of it.

The book has two parts. Part One deals with the principles of the Christian revolution and Part Two concerns itself with their application. His opening chapter reveals "A World In Torment." It is difficult to see how anyone can come from its reading without regretting deeply that "we have not seriously attempted to enthrone love in all the complex relationships of modern society." The second chapter is a thing of beauty. It deals with "The Creative Dream." It is a vivid description of the dream Jesus dreamed until it flung him on a cross. Yet "Jesus, with all his dreaming, made a contribution toward social betterment that is unequalled in the records of the race." Chapter Three shows that "The Way" is "revolution through reconciliation." But if any one deems the "Way" a pious morsel good to the taste of the apologist for "things as they are" let him take due notice now that he had best refrain from reading Chapter Three! In the fourth chapter the "False Starts" of politics, violence and other forms of coercion are scrutinized with the keenness of a two-edged sword. Chapter Five inquires how to change "The System." The change is under way and he who has eyes may see: "In the midst of the ocean of misunderstanding and ill-will and greed the new continent is even now arising, and one day as the waters recede we shall discover that 'God has chosen the things which the world regards foolish, in order to put wise men to shame.'" Part Two illustrates how the "revolution through reconciliation" may be wrought through the home, the school, the church, the world of industry, and the world of nations. Of these the chapter on the school is by far the best. That small groups should try "the Way" without waiting for its universal adoption is urged throughout the book.

Many doubtless will fail to agree with all the writer holds. In his advocacy of pacifism he seems to assume that those who cannot follow him in his total capitulation to non-resistance lack genuine Christian conviction about the wickedness of war. Hosts of Christian thinkers will resent a suggestion like that. There are other faults, among them the tendency to wordiness. This may result from the fact that the second part of the book illustrates the first, and preacher-like (for who among us is without this sin?) he simply cannot illustrate without extensive, excessive exhorting. For all that, one is willing to be penalized by periodic perorations, when the book as a whole provides such a feast for the mind and stirs one's imagination with a vision of what the reign of God can really mean among men.

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