

BOOK REVIEWS—cont.

with the impression that Fenton has not quite got round yet to this sort of thing. No doubt he will.

In this country, also, confidentiality, permissiveness and non-directiveness seem to have acquired the status of an unholy trinity, all complete. This was never the position adopted by Fenton, though he sometimes left himself open to such misinterpretations. The present handbook, as has already been suggested, is much less vulnerable in this respect. The limits of permissiveness, both in terms of discussion and behaviour, seem to stand out more clearly.

The emphasis on non-directive techniques seems also to be toned down in two main ways; the first, a greater recognition of the possible value of more directive methods at least for certain types of counsellor personalities; the second, an assertion of the importance of appropriate feelings in the counsellor as opposed to mere technique. Fenton cites Carl Rogers in support of the view that procedures and techniques are secondary to warm and accepting attitudes. Rogers, however, has recently gone further than this and has said "Whatever is real in me is more important than playing a role of acceptance or empathy. I feel that to listen to oneself accurately and to be 'that which one truly is' in the relationship with the client, is one of the most difficult and demanding tasks I know." Perhaps it is not fair comment to drag this in; what is sauce for the therapist is not necessarily sauce for the counsellor. Yet this kind of realism from Rogers will perhaps take

counsellors further in the long run than Fenton's idealism about human nature. Far-reaching issues lurk beneath the surface of the words here. Perhaps the best that any of us can do is to muster whatever reserves of warm feeling we may possess, learn to live with or control our other feelings and settle for that as a basis for helping others.

One final comment must be made: The expansion of counselling activities in California is clearly proceeding on a vigorous, healthy basis and one would look forward to these developments being accompanied by an even further maturing of Fenton's thinking on these matters. One could only see this as providing further stimulus and support for us in our own efforts.

R. L. MORRISON.

DELIVERANCE TO THE CAPTIVES

Karl Barth

(Translated by Marguerite Wieser)

(S.C.M. Press Ltd. 1961. pp.160. 12s. 6d.)

ANYONE with knowledge of the countless volumes languishing on the shelves of second-hand bookshops realises that published sermons are no longer the favourite reading they were in earlier generations. The great sermons and the decisive utterances of the past are classics which will continue to be read and studied but a vast quantity of mediocre and inferior material died from exposure soon after appearing in print. Today the modern publisher has to be careful before issuing any book of sermons unless he is prepared to sustain financial loss. As a consequence we

BOOK REVIEWS—cont.

are spared the mass of dreary stuff which confronted our forefathers and, if sermons appear in print nowadays, they are usually marked by some special excellence of diction, creative thought and power. Lucidity, relevance and interest are essential qualities.

Deliverance to the Captives is an outstanding example of this modern trend. Let no one be deterred from reading it by the thought that it is merely a collection of sermons. Its importance is that it contains the distillation of the profound thought, experience and faith of a devout Christian, an able Minister of the Word and a theological giant — Karl Barth. Here is a direct way of access to a great mind and the reader who seeks such an encounter will surely find lasting benefits.

For those who know nothing of Barth or of his massive contribution to Christian thought, the admirable preface to the volume by Dr. John Marsh will tell them all they need to know to 'place' the preacher.

A critique of Barthian theology is not called for in a review of this kind. Nor is it necessary because there is nothing in these sermons which really lies outside the main stream of historic Christianity. Here we find the great truths of the Faith proclaimed with simplicity, relevance, immense power and burning sincerity. Here we find the learned professor out of his study and lecture hall and among men speaking of the faith that is in him "to give light to them that sit in darkness . . . and to guide their feet into the way of peace."

With a few exceptions these sermons were preached in the

Chapel of Basle Prison where "Barth has exercised a truly remarkable hidden ministry, visiting and preaching regularly." This should give the readers of the PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL a special interest in them. Leaving the University precincts this eminent thinker, scholar, lecturer and writer appears in the prison as a humble man of God and spiritual leader — a sinner with a message of hope, comfort, forgiveness and joy to his fellow-sinners. He proclaims the transcendence of God and the helplessness of man but, at the same time, he points the way to man's restoration and holds out a hope for all mankind. This is particularly relevant for men and women in prison. He preaches the everlasting Gospel which, on his lips, becomes a contemporary challenge and invitation. It is the ancient remedy which remains as potent and up-to-date as ever. He can stand side by side with the prisoner and share his finiteness and feebleness as he faces the God who is over all and in all — Sovereign yet "totally grace". Who can read these sermons — especially "Saved by grace", "The criminals with Him", "All" and "He stands by us" — without being profoundly moved and challenged?

In his approach to prisoners, Barth never strikes a wrong note. He is never smug or condescending. He never wields the big stick. He places himself with them and urges them to join him — by way of penitence, trust and thanksgiving — in the true worship of God which is bound to have effects on their character and conduct. Such is Barth's compassion and understanding that I imagine that no prisoner has ever been put off or discouraged from making a fresh start

BOOK REVIEWS—cont.

in life by any word or action of this remarkable spiritual guide.

Deliverance to the Captives is a little book of immense value to any thoughtful reader, even if it is only regarded as evidence of what has been happening on one of the many battle-fronts against sin and crime.

To the doubter or the person on the fringe of belief, it will perhaps give a better appreciation of the Christian revelation and of the spiritual interpretation of man and the universe.

For the practising Christian, it will provide countless themes for devout meditation: and the prayers which are included might well be used as a basis for a renewed or enriched life of prayer.

For Chaplains and all who are called to minister to prisoners these sermons might serve as models, both in content and presentation, of what is needed. We are reminded once again that "The Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation". The Chaplain who substitutes pious exhortation 'without form, and void' or the 'pep talk' flavoured with racy anecdote and moral uplift is neglecting a wonderful opportunity and failing in his stewardship.

Readers in this country will be grateful to the publisher and the translator for making this work available to them. It seems churlish to add that there are one or two unfortunate misprints. As we read, it is difficult to realise that Karl Barth is not addressing us in our mother-tongue. No higher compliment can be paid to any translator.

It has often been remarked that "you cannot draw prisoners to

Christ without, *ipso facto*, drawing them away from crime". If this be true — and there is little room for doubt — the preacher of these sermons can be regarded as a most powerful magnet. He sets forth the glory of God and sets forward the salvation of men — "in this world and the next."

HUGH SMITH.

THE STRUGGLE FOR PENAL REFORM

(Library of Criminology No. 3)

Gordon Rose

Stevens & Sons Ltd. 1961. pp. 328

£2 10s. 0d.

PUBLISHED to coincide with the Rally organised by the National Campaign for the Abolition of Capital Punishment in April, Dr. Rose's book outlines penal development over the last hundred years in all its aspects, from young offenders and the growth of probation to corporal and capital punishment. This is such a wide canvas that the treatment is necessarily diffuse, but the subject matter is interesting to penologists particularly because so little has previously been written about developments in the latter half of this period. The mass of detailed facts presented by Dr. Rose suggest that he has been painstaking in his research and goes some way towards justifying the high price of the book!

The Struggle for Penal Reform is a misleading title. It would have been more appropriate to call the book by its sub-title "The Howard League and its Predecessors." This is really the history of the voluntary penal reform societies, and the struggle is seen through their spectacles. Scant attention is paid