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Reviews

A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Kings, by J. A. Montgomery, edited by H. S. Gehman. The International Critical Commentary (T. and T. Clark, 35s. net).

This is a monumental work by a great American scholar who did not live to see its publication. Although not published till 1952, the book had been ready for publication twice before, in 1941 and 1944. Each postponement led to invaluable revision and additions. The final editing, at the author's request, was carried out by one of his former students, Professor H. S. Gehman, who brought the bibliography up to date and added an excellent chronological table and the indices. The Commentary is on the grand scale that the reader has come to expect from the I.C.C. and is a powerful example of painstaking and erudite scholarship, reflecting the results of a life's work. It is more than a Commentary on the text; it is an essay that "involves the related linguistics, text-criticism history of interpretation from the ancient versions down to the present, and the attempt at exact translation with critical display." A most valuable part of this book is the twenty-three page bibliography, listing books and articles either of general interest or of frequent citation and having some direct bearing on the Books of Kings. Another admirable feature of the Commentary is the lengthy section, supplied by the editor, dealing with the complicated question of chronology. Here again a bibliography is given setting forth recent literature on this subject. The difficulties involved in trying to date according to our calendar are made abundantly clear. Of particular interest are seven full pages containing tables of the kings of Israel and Judah in the form of synchronisms with events in external history. Both in the Introduction and in the Commentary on the text the book is very well documented and pays particular attention to the significance of recent archaeological discoveries which have a bearing on the period of history under review. The author's use of such evidence is balanced and sane, and reveals a true critical discernment. The style of writing throughout is easy and attractive. In the Book of Kings, says the author, we have "a history written with a theological theory and a practical aim. It has for subject not mere History, but the lessons of History." The commentator remains conscious of this fact all through his work and reinforces the impression already made by the text that "the God of the Bible is the God of

History." The production of this book is up to the admirable standards set by T. and T. Clark in this whole series. There is, however, one printer's error—a repetition of the word "may" on page twenty-five, line twenty-one.

D. S. RUSSELL.

The Servant of the Lord. And other Essays on the Old Testament, by H. H. Rowley (Lutterworth Press, 25s.).

In this volume Dr. Rowley brings together a collection of unpublished and previously published essays. In the first essay in two parts on "The Servant of the Lord," Dr. Rowley not only reviews Individual, Collective and Fluid Theories of the Servant, but advances his own view. All readers will be struck with the author's emphasis on the fluidity of interpretation not only in the original conception, but also in the "fulfilment" of the portrayal in the Servant Songs. This opening essay gives us nearly sixty pages of scholarship and insight.

The seven essays which follow have already appeared in various journals and works in Holland, Hungary, United States and Britain, but now appear conveniently and in revised and expanded form. Successively, Professor Rowley brings to light the newly conceived connections between The Servant and the Davidic Messiah (a point of view which will probably be new to many readers), considers the religious values in the Old Testament Prophecy, reaffirms his continued support of the order of *Nehemiah* and *Ezra* despite strong attempts to reinstate the traditional order of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*, offers an interpretation of Ruth's marriage which is eminently sound and acceptable, sees in *The Song of Songs* a collection of Love Songs, and explains why we may still regard this book as worthy of inclusion in the Canon, and returns to his first love in discussing and affirming the unity of the book of *Daniel*. Finally, the author deals with the ever growing literature on the Patriarchal Narratives and shows how these narratives are to be taken far more seriously in a historical sense than was formerly common. Indeed as various facets of the Patriarchal narratives are seen to reflect contemporary conditions, the question arises whether the revelation to Abraham, for example, may not also be seen to be congruous with its context?

This book is a further proof of Professor Rowley's extraordinary range of knowledge and of his capacity to be constructive in spite of the weight of knowledge. All will profit from the volume and Baptists in particular will be justly proud that the leading British Old Testament scholar is also a Baptist Minister.

G. HENTON DAVIES.

The Christ of the New Testament, by A. W. Argyle (Carey Kingsgate Press, 10s. 6d.).

Mr. Argyle has assembled and enlarged a series of papers contributed to the *Expository Times*. His purpose is to show that the divine Sovereignty of Christ is the real unifying principle in the New Testament.

An introductory study emphasises the importance of the Logos conception and its New Testament parallels for the belief in the divinity of Christ. The remainder of the book falls into two broad sections, the former of which examines the words of Our Lord, and show how His claims to a unique relationship with the Father are common to all the main sources of the Synoptic Gospels. In the second, the major part of the book, Mr. Argyle deals mainly with the testimony of the early Church in *Acts* and the Epistles. If we cannot speak of a "theory" of Incarnation, it is there in embryo: belief in the fact is richly clear, and the interest is practical, not speculative—belief in the "saving fact." Revelation and redemption are two sides of the one Divine activity. So, Mr. Argyle goes on to show how the Incarnation reaches its consummation in the Death, Resurrection and Exaltation of the Lord; one great divine act for the salvation and life of men. A useful appended note sets out a number of parallels between Pauline passages and words of Jesus from the Q. tradition; the parallels vary in degree, but their cumulative impression is striking, so as to dispel any notion that the apostle was lacking in knowledge of or interest in our Lord's teaching.

Mr. Argyle writes in a fine spirit of devotion, and many will be helped by him to a fuller appreciation of the true purpose of the New Testament writings. On a number of points one feels a desire for a fuller treatment; that is inevitable, however, when the greatest of all themes has to be confined in so limited a space. But sometimes Mr. Argyle may evoke mild protest by a tendency to a summary treatment of views contrary to his own. For example, a suggestion of Dr. Rawlinson, quoted on page seventy-four, is dismissed with a piece of heavy irony, while at the same time Mr. Argyle admits that the suggestion would reinforce the point of the passage, and that it would be "quite in the Pauline manner." More serious, however, is the dismissal of difficulties which have been sincerely felt concerning the Virgin birth stories. To say that "those who deny the fact and object to the doctrine are often radical critics who doubt all the miracles" is true, but it contains an unjust innuendo. Further, Mr. Argyle quotes with approval: "Our answer to the question of the Virgin Birth depends upon whether we believe that the Spirit of Truth and not that of error brooded over the beginnings of Christianity." This just will not do. That is a bludgeon which

many a rigid conservative might as fairly use against Mr. Argyle himself on many points in his book. Indeed, one feels that this chapter is weakened by the stress that is put upon this question. His attempt to spread this doctrine over the whole New Testament is not convincing—in parts the ice is very thin.

W. S. DAVIES.

The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God. A Study in the Theology of John Calvin, by T. H. L. Parker. (Oliver and Boyd, 10s. 6d.)

In this book the author furthers the study of Calvin and also makes a notable contribution to the discussion of natural theology, whether there is such a thing as natural theology and, if so, how far can it take us? This question has come into importance through the revival of Thomism on the one hand, and the theology of Karl Barth on the other. Barth and Brunner, though of the same school, have crossed swords on it and both have appealed to Calvin. With great care and thoroughness, Mr. Parker has examined Calvin's teaching on the point and his verdict is that on the whole Calvin would seem to justify the Barth side of the argument. But this by no means exhausts the value of this book, which is indeed a very detailed, documented exposition of Calvin's theology of Revelation. According to Calvin the important thing is the knowledge of God. But what is the knowledge of God and how is it acquired? This is obviously a major question for all theologians and, indeed, all preachers and teachers of religion. Well, this book gives a good exposition of Calvin's views on this important issue. Hence it repays close and serious study. The author has already given us a book on Calvin as a preacher and his theory of preaching (*The Oracles of God*, 1947). Now he adds this new volume to his exposition of the great master. May we hope for still more? The author has himself a clear mind and a gift of lucid exposition. This is theological writing of a very high standard and it will take its place immediately amongst recent books on Calvin and Calvinism.

A. DAKIN.

The Principle of Authority, by P. T. Forsyth. (Independent Press, 18s. 6d.).

Dr. Wheeler Robinson used to say that if Christians could only agree about the nature of authority, other differences would rapidly be resolved. The subject of this book is certainly of fundamental importance and we are grateful to the publishers for producing, after a lapse of nearly forty years, a second edition

of a contribution to the problem by so distinguished an author. Authority is here related to certainty, sanctity and society. Under the first head are discussed such matters as experience, faith, obedience and the source of certainty. Under "sanctity" are considered the object, guarantee and foundation of religion. The last section, concerning society, includes discussions on the Church, liberty, individualism, humanity and election.

This is not one of Forsyth's best books. There is some overlapping in the arrangement of material and the style is sometimes obscure. The unity and authority of the Gospel could have been more clearly and happily expressed. The truth is obscured rather than elucidated by such random, sweeping and inaccurate statements as, "Not only is Luke, Pauline, but even Mark" (p. 140). Nevertheless the author has sufficiently shown the inwardness and spirituality, yet also the divine givenness and objectivity, of true authority ("We have an external authority which is not foreign to the soul, yet not native to it." p. 401) which is in its essence not limiting but expansive and creative. The service of God is indeed at once the completest submission to true authority and the realisation of perfect freedom. As Forsyth truly says, "It is in the region of theology that this greatest of questions must be fought out."

A. W. ARGYLE.

The Dead Sea Scrolls. A Preliminary Survey, by A. Dupont Sommer, translated from the French by E. Margaret Rowley. (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 7s. 6d.)

Since the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in a cave near 'Ain-Feshka in 1947 much has been written on their origin and significance. A good deal of this literature is not easily accessible to the general reader, and we are greatly indebted to Miss Rowley, daughter of Prof. H. H. Rowley, for making available in English this fascinating little book. She has done her work so well that rarely, if ever, are we consciously reading a translation. The first chapter relates the circumstances of the discovery and subsequent editing and publishing of most of the scrolls, either wholly or in extracts, by the American Schools of Oriental Research and Prof. Sukenik of Jerusalem University. The following chapters are devoted to a more detailed study of the various scrolls—the two of *Isaiah* giving us a Hebrew text which is perhaps 1,000 years older than the oldest examples of the Massoretic text. The *Habakkuk Commentary* contains cryptic references to the "Master of Justice" and the "Wicked Priest" or the "Man/Prophet of Untruth," whom the author identifies with both Aristobulus II and his successor Hyrcanus II. Extracts are

given from the *Rule* or, as the American scholars call it, the *Manual of Discipline*. Prof. Dupont Sommer connects this and another scroll, the *Rule of Battle for the Sons of Light*, with the Damascus Document, as all coming from the same community, which is identified with the Essenes. The scrolls were hidden in the cave about 66 A.D. Not every reader will agree with the author's dating and interpretation of these Scrolls, but everyone, specialist and non-specialist alike, may read this book with pleasure. The clear illustrations add considerably to its value.

GEORGE FARR.

God Spoke by Moses, by Oswald T. Allis. (Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 9s. 6d.).

This book make rather laborious reading. The author sketches quite adequately, in the space available, the outline of the Pentateuch and here and there attempts little Christian homilies on its teaching and history. The book is written on the assumption of Mosaic authorship upon which, it would seem, the inspiration and the authority of the Pentateuch depend. The arguments which the author uses to substantiate his claim are not at all convincing, and he conveniently passes over passages which the reader anticipates might cause him considerable difficulty in explaining. In addition, most of the arguments put forward by critics of the Mosaic authorship are left severely alone. The arguments he does bring forward are, for the most part, of a very general character, but they arrive at conclusions which are not only decisive, but at times even dogmatic. The "higher critics" —at whom he tilts his lance more frequently than is perhaps necessary—"involve themselves in all sorts of difficulties and contradictions" when they reject the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. But the reader is left wondering at the author's own parlous plight. A typical expression is that made concerning *Deuteronomy*—"No book of the Pentateuch . . . gives clearer indication of authorship and occasion than does *Deuteronomy*." And yet it is in his treatment of this book that the author is, if anything, least convincing. Moses, being a prophet, anticipates the kinds of laws that must apply in the new circumstances of life in Canaan and even changes some of the Sinaitic legislation to make it applicable to this new situation. It is too much, however, that Moses should write his own epitaph, and so chapter xxxiv, 10-12 are attributed to some unknown author who wrote them as "a worthy tribute to that mighty man of God."

D. S. RUSSELL.

The Prickly Pear, by E. G. Fisk. (Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 7s. 6d.)

The prickly pear is the author's symbol of the Moslem world—cruel, forbidding, yet with refreshing fruit for those with faith and courage to brave the thorns. This record of the writer's many years of missionary work in Morocco bears heartening witness to God's redeeming grace and to the power of the Holy Spirit to sustain both missionary and convert in the midst of the harshest hostility. These sincere, unstudied pages will increase our knowledge, and strengthen sympathy and prayer for all who work in Moslem countries.

My Servant Moses, by G. E. Hicks. (Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 8s. 6d.)

The author is convinced that Moses is the author of the Pentateuch, and that the account of Israel's journey from Egypt to Canaan is his personal record of events. In a series of short chapters he expounds the outstanding incidents in the life and leadership of Moses, and the dominating place he has won in Hebrew and Christian thought. He writes vividly and with imagination, aptly applying the story to our present conditions and needs. He gives a moving picture of this faithful leader of men and servant of God. Even those who cannot accept the writer's critical position will find themselves re-reading the records with quickened insight and understanding.

F. BUFFARD.

The Free Churches and Episcopacy. Ernest A Payne (Carey Kingsgate Press, 9d.)

We welcome this reprint of Dr. Payne's paper, which appeared in *Theology* (June 1951) in which he offers a reply to the proposal made in the now famous sermon of the Archbishop of Canterbury for an experimental episcopacy among the Free Churches. The paper maintains that the true issue is the *historic* episcopate, and useful discussion on this basis is vitiated not only by its begging of the fundamental question, but also by the variety of interpretations of episcopacy amongst the Anglicans themselves. Dr. Payne states forcibly the biblical and theological reasons for the original and continuing break with the established episcopal system. The Free Church attitude is influenced by experience of the past, by the realisation that episcopacy has not in practice maintained unity, continuity or purity of doctrine and by the knowledge of the blessing of the Spirit in non-episcopal bodies. The gist of the reply is that we are always ready to discuss, but that it is always more helpful to know what one is discussing. The

pamphlet is to be warmly commended to Baptists and all Free Churchmen.

The New Testament Teaching on Baptism, by Stephen F. Winward (Carey Kingsgate Press, 2s.).

This is a useful guide to a systematic study of Baptism in the New Testament. It contains twenty-eight separate studies, with Scripture passages and brief comments. The emphasis is, on the whole, sound, especially in the matter of the theological significance of Baptism. But whether so extended a series of lessons on Baptism is needed is open to question. The statement on page thirty-nine that it is through Believers' Baptism that we become Sons of God is the transference to our own lips of the contention that generations of Baptists have fought vigorously! It is surely no legitimate inference from the passage to which it is attached—*Gal. iii. 26f.*

W. S. DAVIES.

So Great Salvation, by Steven Barabas. (Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 17s. 6d.).

One may study the Keswick Convention from books as one would study any interesting varieties of religious experience; for such a pursuit this volume is indispensable. It is a masterly summary of the origin and development of the Keswick movement, now seventy-seven years old. We are initiated into the secret of the Keswick technique and method. These are "Bible-centred," the basic conviction being that the whole Bible is God's word to us. The annual Conventions aim at the promotion of "scriptural holiness." Its speakers are always those who can witness to a personal experience of sanctification by faith. Speakers and hearers alike testify to the unity of spirit expressed in the words "All one in Christ Jesus" on large signs outside and inside the marquee in which the meetings are held and emphasised in the Communion Service which brings each Convention to a close. The teaching at Keswick follows a sequence, there is a distinct moving forward of the thought of the Convention from day to day throughout the week and in everything the guidance and control of the Holy Spirit is sought. There is a chapter on "The Spirit Filled Life" and another on "Christian Service." The book concludes with biographical sketches of nine well-known Keswick leaders including our own F. B. Meyer. One may study the Keswick Convention by attendance at some, at least, of the meetings. This the author has not managed to do: indeed he has never visited Britain. In view of this his book is a most remarkable achievement. The reviewer has been to several sessions at Keswick and can testify that Dr. Barabas has made himself familiar with its

spirit and teaching. One may study this movement in an endeavour to appreciate the special contribution that Keswick has made to the life of the Christian Church in all parts of the world. R. H. Coats in *The Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* acknowledges that such movements "seek to conserve a neglected truth and in an age of materialism and externalism in religion have incalculably deepened the spiritual life of the Church." On the other hand there is the possibility of weakness, the most serious being the tendency to "an exaggerated individualism" (Frederick Platt in *E.R.E.*) This book lends weight to Coats' appreciation and Platt's criticism. There are several misprints. Here and there the author, unfamiliar at first hand with the religious life of this country, seems to slip up e.g. (page 11): "Of the Dissenting Churches perhaps the Plymouth Brethren, although few in number, had the most far-reaching influence." (In the early 1870s.) An index of Scriptural passages would have increased the value of the volume. The bibliography is extensive and comprehensive: the tolerant spirit of the author is seen here also, for he includes books and articles written from another point of view than that of Keswick or containing criticisms of the movement.

W. R. WEEKS.

The Fellowship of Believers, by Ernest A. Payne. (Carey Kingsgate Press, enlarged edition, 8s. 6d.).

Dr. Payne has done well to issue this new and enlarged edition of his deservedly well-known book. A number of revisions have been made, certain passages have been brought up to date, while further historical references, two new appendices and two entirely new chapters have been added. When the first edition appeared in 1945 the reviewer in this journal expressed regret that Worship and the Church Meeting had not received greater attention. In the present volume the author has added a chapter on the former theme and given a few pages to the latter, though a fuller treatment of the Church Meeting would have added to the value of the book. The decline of the Church Meeting is partly due to the weakening hold of modern Baptists in this country on the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. This has a bearing on the subject of the Ministry, to which the third chapter is devoted. One fears that there is growing up among us an idea of the Ministry as some kind of caste set apart. We should do well to remember that John Smyth and others included within the ministry which Christ set in His Church others beside pastors or elders. All service in the Church is ministry. Also quoted often nowadays is the practice—referred to by Dr.

Payne—of certain Baptist churches in earlier times refraining from holding a Communion until a recognised minister or settled Pastor was available to preside. But surely, so to deprive church members of the Lord's Supper was wrong? Our ancestors were not always right. But these are only a few of the many reflections which arose in one's mind in reading this competent work. Many issues of interest and importance are raised and, as the author rightly says, it introduces themes which require much further thought and study if Baptists are to realise what is really involved in membership of the Body of Christ. For this and other reasons we welcome Dr. Payne's timely, informative new edition of a valuable book.

Religious Dances, by E. Louis Backman (George Allen and Unwin, 35s.).

It is an unusual and in some ways intriguing subject with which this book deals—the origin, history and significance of religious dancing in the Christian Church. Professor Backman, of the University of Upsala, has obviously pursued the most extensive researches in compiling what promises to be the standard work in this particular field. Introduced in the third century, perhaps earlier, dancing in the Church was believed to be an imitation of the supposed dancing of the angels in Heaven, and it soon came to be associated with the mysteries of the Resurrection. Old Testament references, *Matt.* xi, 17 and *Luke* vii, 32, were cited in its support. In some places converts danced to their baptism—according to Ambrose of Milan. As a Church ritual dancing has continued to this day, especially in the Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox and Coptic Churches. But the reviewer recalls a Baptist Sunday School procession in which there took place at intervals along the route ribbon dancing similar to some described in this book, and one has heard of “pentecostal” meetings where the command in *Ezekiel* vi. 11, “smite with thine hand, stamp with thy foot,” would seem to have been obeyed with gusto. The author devotes particular attention to the dancing epidemics (connected with ergot poisoning) of the Middle Ages and shows how prominently religious dancing has featured in the history of medicine. Packed with information, the book has a large number of illustrations, many of them most unusual, and there is a full bibliography. While this scholarly work will appeal primarily to experts in certain specialised fields the more general reader will also find it interesting and instructive to follow Professor Backman along the curious and comparatively little-known by-road down which he leads.

GRAHAM W. HUGHES.