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Reviews.

The New Bible Handbook, edited by G. T. Manley, assisted by G. C. Robinson and A. M. Stibbs. (Inter-Varsity Fellowship, 10s. 6d.)

This Handbook is simply written for the general reader, and is designed to give him a broad acquaintance with the source and significance of the books of the Bible. It is divided into four parts, of which the first treats of the Bible as a whole, the second of the Old Testament, the third the Inter-Testamental period, and the fourth the New Testament. The separate sections on the books of the Old and New Testaments offer a very brief account of the date and authorship, an analysis of the contents, a short exposition of the message, and some themes for further study. The whole is written from a strongly conservative standpoint, and if that were all there was to say it could be commended to those who are content with traditional views on authorship and who are eager to possess the religious meaning of the Bible.

So far as the New Testament is concerned little more need here be said. Despite its general conservatism it makes no dogma of tradition. The Pauline authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews is abandoned; Synoptic criticism is accepted without question and Q is acknowledged as a Gospel source; even Form-criticism is recognized to be valuable, despite the extreme scepticism that has marked some of its advocates. Here the authors are content to present their own views and to set forth positively their interpretation of the life and teaching of Jesus without maligning those who do not in all points share their views. The section devoted to the Inter-Testamental period is also, within its necessarily brief compass, a useful summary of the history and ideas of the period.

Unhappily the section devoted to the Old Testament must be much more severely criticized. Here the authors are not content to present their own conservative views. They like to misrepresent those who take a different view, and frequently asperse the *bona-fides* of their scholarship. We are given a long list of the contributors to this volume, but we are not told which author contributed which chapter. There is therefore, collective responsibility for the whole, and in particular the three editors must accept responsibility for the whole. Amongst the contributors there does not figure the name of a single well-known

Old Testament scholar.¹ It would often appear that the authors are dependent for their information on the writings of those they malign, though their debts are not always recognised. At other times they rest on authorities that are themselves second or third-hand workers and not authorities at all. Frequently well-known scholars are cited as authorities for some statement that is acceptable to the authors, when their general point of view would not for a moment be accepted as authoritative. All this tends to throw dust in the eyes of the reader, and it was doubtless because of this that the book was described to the reviewer as thoroughly dishonest before he had read a line. With this description he does not agree, however. He prefers to describe it as incompetent, so far as its Old Testament sections are concerned, and as written by the blind and for the blind.

The commonly accepted critical view on the date and composition of the Pentateuch is anathema to the authors. It is all traced to the rationalistic and evolutionary views of Wellhausen, and it is blandly stated that it rests on nothing higher than a determination to reject miracle. One of the contributors to this volume states that "both advocates and opponents of Wellhausen's theories come to their consideration with certain convictions already formed, which influence their conclusions." If the author cares to discredit his own reasoning by the admission that it is but a rationalization of conclusions determined *a priori*, that is his own affair. But he has no business to assume that this is true of all reasoning. Inquiry that is not free is not true inquiry, and there is nothing to be ashamed of in bringing to God the service of a consecrated mind. Here as in other things service and freedom are not incompatible. It is, in any case, wholly false to suggest that all who accept modern views on Pentateuchal criticism began with their conclusions. So far as the reviewer is concerned, he approached the question from the most conservative standpoint, and when faced with the critical arguments he studied Orr's *Problem of the Old Testament* in order to find the answers. It was that book which convinced him, against his own conservative predisposition, to accept the point of view it vainly strove to overthrow. Many of the theological and philosophical ideas of Wellhausen he rejects, as do other Old Testament scholars; for Pentateuchal criticism does not rest on the evolutionary presuppositions of that scholar, any more than does Synoptic criticism, which he also accepted. Pentateuchal criticism began long before Wellhausen, and without any such presuppositions, and it is possible to recognize our

¹The name of J. Stafford Wright, however, deserves to be better known. His Tyndale Lectures on *The Date of Ezra's Coming to Jerusalem* (1947) is a careful and scholarly piece of work.

debt to Wellhausen and to others who contributed to its growth, without being bound by all his or their ideas. Two distinguished Baptist scholars, H. Wheeler Robinson and Theodore H. Robinson, have adopted the critical view of the Old Testament. It is regrettable to find another Baptist Robinson permitting his name to stand on the title page of a book which implies that every scholar's acceptance of this view rests on an *a priori* disloyalty to the Christian faith.

To treat in detail of the arguments of this book is impossible here. One or two samples may be given. The difference between the first and the second accounts of Creation is said to be due to the fact that the first may rest on a vision vouchsafed to Moses, while the second represents Adam's standpoint, transmitted in a written tradition through Noah. It is stated that this is supplementary to the former, but not contradictory. The writer is doubtless aware that the former states that man and woman were created together after all the birds and the beasts, while the latter states that man was created before the birds and beasts and woman after. The honesty of the writer who cannot perceive any contradiction here may be recognized; but only if his intellectual incompetence is recognized.

Again it is stated that the attribution of the Book of Isaiah to more than one author has as its constant factor an unwillingness to admit the predictive character of the later chapters. Here again it is probable that the writer is quite honest in his attribution to others of intellectual dishonesty, and is merely ignorant of the real grounds on which their conclusions rest. All who assign certain chapters to Deutero-Isaiah recognize fully their predictive character. For it is no less prediction to announce the near future to the exiles in Babylon than to announce the distant future to the men of Judah in Jerusalem. The one is prediction that has meaning to those addressed; the other is not. The one is spiritual prophecy, prediction that is infused with a living message from God; the other is not. The prophecies of Deutero-Isaiah *assume* the conditions of the exile and *predict* what is to emerge from those conditions. It is, indeed, interesting to note that one of the contributors to this book, in treating of the Servant Poems of Isaiah, observes that "these have all an immediate reference to *the historical situation of the moment*, but few deny that they find their fulfilment in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ." What reference they can be given to the historical situation of the eighth century B.C., is not stated. In so far as they can be given any reference to a historical situation it is to that of the exilic period, and if that is neither the time of their utterance nor of their fulfilment, it is hard to see how it can be called a reference to the situation of the moment.

Again, similar charges are levelled against those who hold that the Book of Daniel was written in the second century B.C. It is once more stated that the question is decided on *a priori* grounds according to the view taken of its supernatural elements. The present writer has devoted much attention to this question, and is not aware that he has ever based his case on such a consideration. He has presented much objective evidence, which the writer of this chapter has clearly either never seen or never digested, or he could not have made such statements as the one that Cyaxares or Gobryas have been suggested as the originals of Darius the Mede. It is perfectly true that they have been suggested, but both suggestions are completely impossible, as the present writer has shown on objective grounds. Again, Driver's statement about the Aramaic of the Book of Daniel is stated to reflect that great scholar's "characteristic assurance," and dismissed on grounds that only reveal the writer's ability to be irrelevant. Actually S. R. Driver was supremely known for his caution, and the present writer has shown that his caution was here fully justified. We are told, as though it were an answer to Driver, that recently Aramaic forms and documents have been found centuries older than Daniel's time. No Aramaic documents centuries older than those known to Driver have been found, and no recent discoveries have provided any evidence different from that known to him and fully taken into consideration. The present writer has published a full vindication of Driver's statement, based on documented facts and not on vague irrelevance. Again it is probable that it is ignorance and not dishonesty which is responsible for this throwing of dust in the eyes of readers. Further, it is stated that the view of the four kingdoms of the Book of Daniel for which the present writer has argued in a monograph rests on an *a priori* determination to explain away the predictions of the book. Such a statement would be malicious if it were not ignorant. A genuine acquaintance with the facts, and especially with the fact that scholars against whom such a charge could by no stretch of language be levelled have held the fourth kingdom to be the Greek, might have saved the author such misrepresentation.

In the same way, it is stated that the book of Jonah "has been assigned by those who doubt the possibility of its miracles to the fourth century B.C.," as though once more the issue is one to be settled on *a priori* grounds. Against this it is argued that "the magnitude of Nineveh, once denied by the critics, has been proved by excavation. The circuit of the inner walls was eight miles, and there were suburbs." This is either disingenuous or ignorant, and more probably the latter. The author has not troubled to ask how such a city could be described as a city of three days' journey, or

how one could enter a day's journey into it without finding himself right through it, or how its population could number 120,000 infants in arms.

It will be seen that we are brought back again and again to the question of miracle as the all-determining issue. Yet on that question there is a certain amount of shuffling within this volume. For while some chapters take it as a dogmatic axiom that any miracle recorded in the Bible must be accepted, while other alleged miracles may be freely rejected, and modern scholars are roundly condemned for their supposed *a priori* rejection of miracle, other chapters recognize that it is really a question of evidence and not of dogma. In regard to the miracles recorded in Exodus we are told that "some allowances must be made for oriental modes of thought and expression, and views differ as to the extent to which God may have used natural forces to work these signs." Again, in regard to the standing still of the sun in Josh. x, the writer contents himself with stating that something more than poetic imagery must be conceded, and that *however explained* there is no need to doubt its occurrence. Once it is conceded that there may be a rational explanation of miracles, and that there may be exaggerations in the Biblical accounts of miracles, the whole question is removed from the realm of dogma. The present writer believes in the possibility of miracles, and thinks it is nonsense to suppose that God is helpless to initiate events in His own universe. But that does not mean that every alleged miracle happened precisely as it is narrated. In some cases he thinks the evidence is compelling, while in others he thinks that there may be exaggerations, as the above quoted contributor to this volume admits. He therefore, prefers to examine first, on objective grounds, the date and character of a narrative before approaching the question of its miracles. To say that this is to proceed from a predetermined rejection of miracle is simply untrue, however ignorantly untrue.

This review is already too long, though its justification must be the potential mischief of these unfounded charges by ill-informed writers against scholars of integrity and understanding. It is particularly unpleasant to find that Theodore Robinson is referred to as an example of the unbelieving criticism that is attacked. On the other hand, Snaith is cited several times with approval, and never with disapproval, as though he belonged to the school of these authors. Edward Robertson is referred to as the writer of a series of scholarly monographs when he can be used against those who follow Wellhausen, while the said monographs are elsewhere dismissed along with the works of the critics, since his views are really no more acceptable to the writers of this book. Their own lack of first-hand scholarship

comes out frequently. They know of the Chester Beatty New Testament papyri, but apparently have no knowledge of the Old Testament papyri in the same collection. They show a very slight and second-hand acquaintance with the Ras Shamra texts, and no evidence that they have seriously consulted the authorities on them. They cite Sir Charles Marston as authority for the statement that Joshua is referred to by name in the Amarna Letters, though elsewhere it is admitted that the reference is uncertain. Actually Marston is no authority on Semitic philology, and the name that is found in the Amarna texts cannot be equated philologically with the name of Joshua.

The reviewer is nowhere referred to by name, though he is once quoted. But he is included in the general misrepresentation that abounds in this volume, and may be forgiven for defending himself and others against the ignorant charges that are made. He has often observed that Fundamentalism has become more fundamental and less negative in recent years, and has numbered many friends in the I.V.F. He counts one of the contributors to this volume a friend, and has a very real respect for another. He deplors the publication of the Old Testament section of this book which returns to the methods he thought outgrown. The preservation of the spiritual significance of the Bible and even the maintenance of traditional views of the date and authorship of the books of the Old Testament, do not really require such misrepresentation of the integrity of others. The God of Truth is not to be served by false witness of this kind.

H. H. ROWLEY.

The Prophetic Word, by W. E. Booth Taylor. (162 pp. Carey Press, 7s. 6d.)

The prophetic movement in Israel is universally acknowledged to have been one of the creative forces in the history of religion, and the prophetic word to have been one of the ways in which God's creative and redemptive power operated in history. Mr. Taylor has attempted, in this book, to recapture something of that creative spirit and to urge the need for a revival of it in the world today.

Nine of the sixteen chapters deal with the message of the major canonical prophets, Amos, Hosea, Micah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Deutero-Isaiah, Haggai and Zechariah, and Jonah. Other chapters are devoted to subsidiary matters—the Book of Job and the work of Ezra and Nehemiah. Then, in order to bring the prophetic succession down to John the Baptist who is the subject of ch. 16, there is a chapter on the history of the last two centuries B.C. The book closes with a chapter on the abiding significance of the prophetic word (ch. 17).

It is obviously written for those who have little or no knowledge of the critical problems of the prophetic writings, and who have no opportunity of access even to the more standard works like *Peake's Commentary* and the *New Commentary on Holy Scripture* from both of which the author quotes freely—perhaps too freely.

But for the more serious reader, even amongst the laymen whom the Foreword designates as the intended readers, the treatment of the subject leaves a lot to be desired. Many things might profitably have received more attention. One misses a discussion of the psychology of Hebrew prophecy such as would help the ordinary reader to catch something of the meaning of prophetic inspiration. Again, we expect an answer to the question: What are the criteria of the true prophet? How did he and his hearers know his word to be the word of God? One wonders why Mr. Taylor selected some prophets and left out others like Joel, Nahum, Obadiah, Zephaniah, and Habakkuk. The omission would be more readily acceptable if it had been explained. Moreover, the extension of the usually recognized limits of prophetic activity in order to include John the Baptist, not only makes the non-inclusion of Elijah and other pre-canonical prophets the more surprising, but necessitated the inclusion of a chapter on history which is hardly germane to the general discussion. Many things which require elucidation, such as the chariot vision of Ezekiel or the symbolic acts of the prophets, are passed over with the barest mention.

A book on the prophetic word ought to contain a full note, if not a whole chapter, on the significance of the spoken and the written word. This book has no such discussion, and even the paragraphs which describe the writing down of Jeremiah's earlier prophecies (pp. 58f) have no appraisal of the timeliness of such a written record at such a time in the sequence of historical events.

It is unfortunate that so slight a book should have come from the Carey Press at a comparatively high price (7s. 6d.), and at a time when paper shortage demands the utmost care in publication.

L. H. BROCKINGTON.

The Person and Place of Jesus Christ, by P. T. Forsyth, M.A., D.D. (Fifth Edition, Independent Press, 7s. 6d., 1946.)

This is a great book. As a theological thinker P. T. Forsyth was in advance of his time, and fought hard against the destructive liberalism which prevailed in contemporary theology. This work was first published in 1909, yet it anticipates many of

the conclusions which find wide acceptance in the most recent New Testament scholarship.

The main argument of this book of 357 pages, comprising twelve lectures, may be summarised as follows. Jesus Christ claimed Deity for Himself in His words and still more by His work, and His claim was vindicated by that redemptive effect of His Cross and Resurrection and the gift of the Holy Spirit which was the content of the apostolic experience and preaching. Forsyth makes much of Matt. xi, 27, (to which we may add the parallel passage in Luke x, 22), which he calls "that embryonic fourth Gospel to which I so often allude" (p. 275) as showing Christ claiming to be in a relation of unique and eternal sonship to the Father. The apostles gave to Christ the faith and worship due to God, because in and through Him they had received pardon and salvation, a new relation of sonship to God, and the gift of the Spirit. The proof of His Deity lay in their redemption by Him. He saved them, not by His teaching, but by His Cross, His Resurrection and His gift of the Holy Spirit; not by illumination and education, but by redemptive forgiveness and regeneration (p. 125, cf., p. 192). The Gospel about Jesus in the early Church truly reflected Jesus' Gospel of Himself. (p.207).

Forsyth discards the Chalcedonian metaphysic of "natures" as outworn, and substitutes a metaphysic of ethics and redemption. Jesus was God-man, not by the mere co-existence of two natures, divine and human, in one divine Person, but by a self-emptying (kenosis) of the pre-existent and eternal Son of God, which mingled, on the human side, with a growing moral achievement and self-fulfilment (plerosis) in one and the same Person. From the divine side the Cross was the nadir of the kenosis, the lowest extreme of His self-humiliation and self-sacrifice. From the human side the Cross marked the summit of Jesus' moral growth and self-fulfilment, whereby He recovered and unfolded what He already was in His Divine Self. "In His lowest limit His divinest mastery shows." (p. 350). By the kenotic act, which took place in eternity, Christ accepted a limitation of His omniscience, omnipotence, and omnipresence, and chose to be born under human conditions, not with a human personality ready-made, but with a soul that grew into a perfect personality, conscious of union with God, by moral exercise and prayer. Forsyth admits that we do not know how eternal Godhead could make the actual condition of human nature His own; but he makes the following italicised suggestion: "it might be better to describe the union of God and man in Christ as the mutual involution of two personal movements raised to the whole scale of the human soul and the divine" (p. 333). Although he speaks of Jesus Christ as one divine Person, he conceives this one

Person as the union of two interpenetrating "personalities" or "personal movements," involving the union of two wills. (p. 346).

Whatever reservations we may have about his highly speculative Christological theories, we cannot fail to admire the author's courageous attempt to re-think the Christological problems in the light of a better psychology and a more ethical metaphysic. One may regret that his emphasis upon the redemption wrought by the Cross leads him to disparage the place of Christ's teaching and of knowledge in the work of salvation; surely both play an indispensable part, as the fourth Gospel proclaims. Nevertheless the chief theme of the book—the Deity of Christ as claimed by Himself as well as by His apostles—is one which scholarship is increasingly vindicating. Forsyth wrote this work a dozen years before the "four-document" theory began to hold the field, but investigations on the basis of that theory show that each of the four "documents," Q, Mark, L, and M, contains independent testimony to Christ's own claim to be equal with God.

Forsyth was undoubtedly a powerful thinker with a deep and inspired religious insight. This is a book which no one can read or re-read attentively without being spiritually enriched.

(There is a misprint on p. 77, where "or" in "the gathering in or as many people" should of course be "of"; "plentitude" on p. 269 should be "plenitude.")

A. W. ARGYLE.

The Holy Communion. A Symposium, Edited by Hugh Martin. (S.C.M. Press, 6s.)

In recent years there has been manifest in many communions of the Christian Church a growing interest both in the doctrine and practice of the Lord's Supper. For this reason the latest publication of the Religious Book Club will be widely welcomed. It is a symposium edited by the Rev. Hugh Martin, who writes the introduction, in which some of the main points of agreement are summarized. The opening chapter examines the evidence of the New Testament and the early Fathers. This is followed by chapters on the Holy Communion in the Roman, Anglican, Presbyterian, Congregational and Baptist, and Methodist Churches. A chapter is also included on "The Holy Communion and the Society of Friends." It is regrettable that there are certain serious omissions, such as the Lutheran and Orthodox traditions, but this is "because the book is addressed mainly to British readers." The contributors, all admirably chosen, do not confine themselves to an exposition of the doctrine, but also describe the practice and

outline the Communion Service in their various Churches. This book will make an important contribution to mutual understanding, fellowship, and unity, and should enable Christians to appropriate more fully our "rich diversity of life and devotion." The reader will probably be impressed not so much by the differences in doctrine and practice, some of them deep and important, but by the large measure of agreement and underlying unity. The sacrament which has been the cause of so much division and strife may yet become, as the Lord intended, the symbol and bond of our unity in Him.

STEPHEN WINWARD.

What Baptists Stand For, by Henry Cook. (Kingsgate Press, 6s.)

Mr. Cook has given us a characteristically vigorous and forthright essay in Baptist apologetic, and his volume will be eagerly read and studied. The book consists of four chapters and a brief postscript, and as appendices Mr. Cook reprints the 1926 Baptist Reply to the Lambeth Appeal, and the resolution on Religious Liberty adopted by the Baptist World Congress at Atlanta in 1939. Much of what he writes is extended comment on these two important documents. The four main topics into which he divides his material and the relative amount of space given to them, are significant in considering the kind of treatment Mr. Cook has adopted. The first section deals with "the supremacy of Scripture," which Mr. Cook says "constitutes the basis of the Baptist position." He devotes only twelve pages to this subject, but the appeal to Scripture underlies all that he says in later sections of the book. The longest chapter is the second, which runs to sixty-three pages and deals with "The Nature of the Church." There follow forty pages on "The Place of Baptism," and twenty-four on "The Principle of Liberty." A brief postscript summarises the points made. At the beginning and end of the book Mr. Cook quotes some words of Dr. Mullins: "God has given to the Baptists of the world a great and sublime task in the promulgation of principles on the preservation of which the spiritual and political hopes of the world depend."

Perhaps the most valuable section of Mr. Cook's book is the survey of the New Testament evidence regarding baptism in chapter III. The reader who works through this carefully and notes also the full index of texts at the end of the book will have been made to consider almost all the passages which have been quoted on one side or the other in discussions of the subject, mode and interpretation of the rite. Notably in chapter IV with its glowing pages on liberty, but also at other places in the book, we

hear again and again the voice of Mr. Cook, the preacher. Few will be able to read to the end without having their emotions as well as their intellects stirred. The frequent allusions to the Anabaptists are as welcome as they are informative. Mr. Cook's insistence on the need for a churchmanship wider than that of the local community is also important.

There are three questions which one would like to put to Mr. Cook. Rather fuller and more direct answers than he gives to them would, we think, strengthen his argument.

(1) Can the appeal to Scripture be made in quite the bald way which he sometimes suggests? Consider his own statements. Baptists, he says, "believe that their position is thoroughly consonant with the mind of the New Testament" (p. 20). "Baptists are prepared to stand or fall by the total impression made on the mind by the record taken as a unity and read in its simple, natural sense" (p. 22, cf. p. 89). But "what is vital for Baptists is not a rigid adherence to the letter of Scripture but the unshakable confidence that in the New Testament we have the historic revelation made by Christ to His people for their guidance in all essential matters affecting the Church's witness and practice" (pp. 21-22). "The teaching of the New Testament on the fundamental facts is everywhere consistent, and that for Baptists must always be conclusive" (p. 14). On the other hand, later on Mr. Cook himself says, "we must frankly admit that people have different minds and different traditions, and they do not all read the New Testament in the same way" (p. 52). "Baptists by their own fundamental principle are committed to accepting the Church polity of the New Testament, and no one can really say with positive certainty what that actually is" (p. 66). The appeal to Scripture is made by every Christian tradition. We need a more careful examination of exactly what this means than Mr. Cook has here given us, but we are glad to know he is already at work on another book on this very subject.

(2) Does the evidence really warrant our saying that "the ordinances were plainly regarded by Christ as an essential part of the Gospel" (p. 69)? Can we even assert unequivocally as Mr. Cook does that they were "specifically enjoined by our Lord and Master Himself" (p. 70)? In view of the difficulties regarding Matt., xxviii, 18-20, of which Mr. Cook himself speaks, it is surely going beyond the facts we possess to say that "Baptism is really a part of that historic Gospel which is basic to all our knowledge of Christ and His Will, and it derives as directly from 'the earthly Jesus' as the Lord's Supper" (p. 98).

(3) How do we relate our belief in the indwelling and guidance of the Holy Spirit to our claim that there should be no deviation from the observance of a New Testament rite in the

New Testament manner? We have been champions of spiritual liberty. On what grounds do we deny the right of the great majority of Christians to express certain insights which have come to them by means of the "baptism" of infants?

A few minor points may be noted for a possible second edition. A. N. Whitehead, though now domiciled in America, should not be described as an American philosopher (p.8). For "participal" read "participial" in the Forsyth quotation on p. 101. On p. 121 line 24 for "not" read "now." For 1552 (p. 158) read 1525, and for 1892 (p. 171) read 1792. What Bertrand Russell calls "a free man's worship" is surely something very different from "the friendship and co-operation that are born of the free acceptance of the invitation of grace" (p. 139). The views of Hubmaier and Menno Simons were hardly as alike as the sentence at the top of p. 157 suggests. To render *cuius regio eius religio* as "the Kingdom determines the faith" is not to translate "freely" (p. 159), but to mistranslate: the point of the formula is that the individual ruler or prince becomes the determining authority.

The book should be discussed in *Fraternalists* side by side with Mr. Walton's *The Gathered Community*, which was reviewed by Dr. Champion in our last issue. It might also very usefully be worked through with groups of young people.

ERNEST A. PAYNE.

The Baptist Movement in the Reformation and Onwards, by Ernest A. Payne, M.A., B.D., Litt. (Kingsgate Press, 1/-).

In the day when "Back to the Reformers" has become a theological watchword, if other communions are to hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches through the Baptists it is very necessary that the Baptist witness should be set forth in relation to the Reformation as a whole. In this lecture which he was requested to give to the Newcastle Theological Society Mr. Payne has provided a type of apologetic of which we need more. Here is a pamphlet to lend to one's theologically-minded non-Baptist friends.

With brevity and clarity he traces the rise of the Anabaptists, lists the almost accidental circumstances which account for Luther, Zwingli and Calvin being deaf to the truths for which the Anabaptists were contending and reveals how mistaken it is to try to separate the rise of the Baptists in Britain from the movement on the Continent. The pamphlet is of great value for this historical sketch alone, and not least for the bibliography it lists. A new history of the Anabaptists is long overdue and we should like to see this sketch expanded into such a volume.

The latter pages of the pamphlet gives a bird's-eye-view of the subsequent secessions from the older Protestant churches which, together with the original stream and missionary activity, have made possible the Baptist World Alliance. Yet it is more than an historical survey. It is genuine contribution to the oecumenical conversations which Barth and Brunner have recently set going on the question of Baptism. "Grebel, Hubmaier, Sattler and the sixteenth century Anabaptists have had to wait a long time for a vindication of their witness from the lips of the spiritual descendants of their persecutors, but that vindication has now come." Today State Churches have to adjust themselves to the fact that Christians are but a small minority, which means to say they are beginning as never before to model themselves on the lines of the gathered church. The gathered church and believers' Baptism go hand in hand. European churches have been prejudiced against believers' Baptism because of their unwillingness to accept the gathered church. A new chapter is now opening, when Baptists can be not a sect hived off but a leaven permeating the church universal. The importance of this pamphlet is that it gives us the right perspective for furthering the mission to which God is assuredly calling us today.

K. C. DYKES.

Morals and the New Theology, by Hywel D. Lewis. (Victor Gollancz, 7s. 6d.)

There are periods of moral decline which, paradoxically enough, produce a superabundance of ethical treatises, and we who are living in an era of unprecedented chaos and fluctuation in the sphere of morals seem to be no exception in this matter. A "booming, buzzing confusion" the arena of human behaviour may indeed be, but there is an academic calm subsisting at the heart of this endless agitation, and an occasional rational appeal is made in defence of the categorical imperative and in condemnation of the laxity of the vulgar. This is all very nice and proper, but the great public can only gape; the experts, we hope, understand.

Mr. Hywell Lewis is not too pleased with the performance of the understanding experts. Professional theologians are, apparently, the worst sinners, for their general tendency is to attempt ethically and doctrinally what a great politician once called the remarkable contortion which results from a firm resolution to look in one direction while planting the feet firmly in the other. It is indeed, "distressing that the theologians who seem most alive to the present plight of religion would have us to go back to dogmatism peculiarly out of date in our day."

The publishers' note on the jacket of the present essay informs us that it is "intended for the general reader as well as for the expert." It will, undoubtedly, receive a warmer welcome from the non-expert, whose function it is to sit and think and wonder fairly disinterestedly, than from the protagonists of "a wholly reactionary dogmatism." Since the latter are not intensely interested, however, in "elementary principles which we take for granted from day to day, and which the moral philosopher seeks to describe and correlate," neither the studied abuse nor the negative criticisms of this latest essay are likely to effect a change of attitude in them.

Mr. Lewis set himself a formidable task, and a hundred odd pages is not quite enough to dispose of Barth, Brunner, Niebuhr, Quick, and N. P. Williams, even with the help of Professor Tennant's invaluable contribution *The Concept of Sin*. There is a courageous attempt, however, in the last two chapters. "The Liberal Alternative" and "Revelation and Morals" to present a "new synthesis in religious thinking." This synthesis deserves sympathetic consideration, which it is not likely to get from the experts who avoid the "accommodations" of liberalism as the plague. The kindly "general reader" will read on even after the heresy of page 138: "For what if Pelagius after all were more right than his detractors?", a query which illuminates the problematic half-quotation from Erasmus on the title-page: "hating Pelagius over much."

There is an "ll" for "will" on page 124, and a "d" and a "t" missing from "freedom" and "until" on page 139.

D. EIRWYN MORGAN.

The Salt and the Leaven, by John W. Harvey. (Allen and Unwin, 3s. 6d.)

Delivering this year's Swarthmore Lecture, Professor John W. Harvey, taking as his title "The Salt and the Leaven," emphasises two functions of religion as a force preserving moral and spiritual values (salt), and permeating and vitalising the general life of society (leaven). It is important for the general reader to remember that here we have a Quaker addressing those who are his fellow-members in the Society of Friends. This explains the method employed in handling the material, e.g., Pacifism being not so much defended as taken for granted, the writer proceeding to discuss the policy which Pacifists ought to adopt.

Professor Harvey clearly discerns and frankly admits perils which are connected with the Quaker form of worship; and the sympathetic reader will be disposed to confess that these dangers

are by no means confined to one section of the Christian community. Perhaps the least convincing section of the book is that in which there is attempted a justification of denominational schools.

The writer has penetrating criticisms to offer in regard to "the delusion of the humanist," with his pathetic belief that "moral gains can be secured permanently," and his failure to realise that the price of liberty is eternal vigilance. "In the life of the spirit the Maginot Line mentality is in the end more deadly even than it proved militarily for poor invaded France."

There will be a welcome for this stimulating book far beyond the bounds of that religious fellowship for which the message was originally prepared.

D. GORDON WYLIE.

Religion and Society, by S. Radhakrishnan. (Allen and Unwin, 10s. 6d. Three illustrations.)

There is something enigmatic about the personality and writings of Professor Radhakrishnan which makes it difficult for the Christian missionary to decide whether to regard him as a friend or foe. A distinguished philosopher, writing always in a pellucid style, deeply learned in the literature of Hinduism, he has urged for many years that Hinduism must be reformed if it is to survive. Such things, for example, as the curse of untouchability, the prejudices of caste, the rigours of the social code, and the emphasis placed on ceremonial and trivialities must be abandoned. But to achieve this reformation no violent break with the past is necessary; all that is needed is the moralization of Hinduism from within. Are we then to regard Radhakrishnan as initiating yet another reform movement within Hinduism which one day will have important results and act as a *praeparatio evangelica*? Some twenty years ago Dr. Nicol Macnicol, a keen and sympathetic student of the trends of religious life in India, thought that this might be so. Our own opinion is that Radhakrishnan's real aim is to formulate a defence of Hinduism which will enable it to withstand the rising tide of Christianity. He has always refused to yield an inch to the Christian claim that Christ is final. Addressing the Calcutta Missionary Conference in 1925, he said that the task of the Christian missionary was not so much to make Christians of Hindus as to purify Hinduism; and he added that it was inconsistent with the whole tradition of Hinduism to concede to Christ an exclusive mediatorship or to regard Him as the unique and final revelation of God. Hence the plea in his *The Hindu View of Life* (1927) for an eirenicon between all religions, and

especially between Christianity and Hinduism, as the only hope for the religious future of the world.

The greater part of the work now before us is taken up with expounding the views outlined above. There are, however, one or two differences of emphasis which call for mention. Radhakrishnan no longer pleads for an understanding between Christianity and Hinduism. He now maintains that only a purified Hinduism can provide the universal religion so sadly needed by a world already unified. As it would contain the essence of the *philosophia perennis*, Hinduism is "likely to be the religion of the new world, which will draw men to a common centre even across the national frontiers" (p. 49). References to Christianity are few, and such as occur are critical. Jesus is represented as using violent language in His denunciation of the cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum; as snubbing the Syrophenician woman; as frequently and vehemently denouncing the Pharisees as vipers, hypocrites, grafters and liars, though He accepted their hospitality. In cleansing the Temple He used a violence inconceivable in the case of a Buddha or a Gandhi. The latter, we are told, "presents to us the purest, the most elevating and the most inspiring ideal known to men."

It is an interesting question whether many Hindus will listen to Radhakrishnan's plea for reform which, as he admits, will give offence to the orthodox. Hinduism is changing, but we doubt whether Radhakrishnan's writings will do much to accelerate the pace of the change, lacking as they do any popular appeal. He is a philosophical recluse who, from the rarefied atmosphere of his study, puts out book after book, the charm of whose style delights the cultivated reader. No Keshab Chandra Sen, still less a Dayananda Saraswati, he never comes down into the market-place to sound his message in the ears of the multitude with prophetic passion and power. Yet we must remember (to mention a European parallel) that Erasmus made a contribution to the Protestant Reformation as well as Luther and Calvin.

For many reasons the first two chapters of the book under review are the most important. Their aim is to show that the appalling condition in which the world finds itself today is due to its secularistic outlook and temper, and that a new World Order is impossible of achievement without the inspiration of religion. Radhakrishnan realises that Marxian Communism is and must be the foe of religion, and he dreads its infiltration into India. He warns young Indians who are attracted by it that it cannot be reconciled with the fundamental motives of Indian life. He sympathizes with much in the social programme of Communism, but insists that the Dialectical Materialism, on which it is based, can lead only to atheism and to a disregard of the sacredness of

human personality. His acute and full criticism of Dialectical Materialism and his demonstration of the need for religion are the best things in the book, and deserve to reach a wide public.

Since *The Hindu View of Life* was made up of the Upton Lectures delivered in Manchester College, Oxford, it is worth mentioning that the substance of this book was delivered as lectures in the Universities of Calcutta and Benares, under the Kamala Lectureship founded by the late Sir Asutosh Mookerjee in memory of his daughter. Those who knew Sir Asutosh will be glad to have the excellent photographs of him and his daughter, as well as one of Radhakrishnan himself. Sir Asutosh was a dynamic personality, a Hindu not remarkably orthodox, a Judge of Calcutta High Court, and one of the greatest Vice-Chancellors the University of Calcutta ever had. His low brow, heavy jowl and walrus moustache gave no indication of his extraordinary intellectual power. Only his remarkable eyes revealed that; and they were inherited by his daughter who is here portrayed in her widow's dress. Like many other highly educated Brahmins, Sir Asutosh said little about his religious beliefs; but it is noteworthy that in founding his lectureship he laid it down that the lecturer should deal with "some aspect of Indian Life and Thought, the subject to be treated from a comparative standpoint."

A. C. UNDERWOOD.

The Gospel in India, by W. E. French, B.Sc., 162 pp. with illustrations and map. (The Carey Press, 6s.)

At a time when India is front-page news and the work of the Baptist Missionary Society is being commemorated in an "India Year" this small book merits and, we are confident, will receive an appreciative welcome.

The author's main purpose is "to place before the churches of Britain the work being done on their behalf by the Baptist Missionary Society and its associated Church bodies in India"; and for this task he is eminently fitted. During the course of thirty-five years' service, most of it in the vicinity of Calcutta, he has had exceptional opportunities for acquainting himself with the variety and scope of the Society's commitments. Not only so, but as an educational expert whose work has been recognised in inter-mission councils, he is able to set out the story against the larger background of the All-India Christian enterprise.

Following a rapid survey of the chief areas where the Society is at work and a brief account of the various religious groups with whom our missionaries have to do, the reader is led on, in a series of short chapters, from those days of noble vision and wise planning by the Serampore trio, through the ever-expanding work

of preaching, Bible translation, healing and education, to the Church that has taken root in Indian soil. As an off-set to the disappointing retardation of progress among the higher castes the story is retold of the truly wonderful ingathering from the humbler ranks of society.

But Mr. French is at his best in his chapters on Education and the Indian Church, and with good reason, for his life-long concern has been the better education of Bengal's youth and the more efficient training of teachers, all with a view to fitting the Church to become a more effective instrument in the supreme task of evangelism. In an absorbingly interesting chapter on *Team Work*, he shows how the Baptist Missionary Society has been well to the fore in all co-operative efforts with other sections of the Church, but in his generous appraisal of the share taken by our missionaries he modestly omits all reference to himself, though the Society has had no more faithful or efficient representative.

Regarding the future Mr. French makes it clear that responsible Indian Christian leaders desire that the older churches should still send out those who are prepared to give India of their best, and he anticipates that when the present tension relaxes—for work has been “carried on in an atmosphere of increasing mistrust between the rulers and the ruled”—the British missionary will no longer be embarrassed by his relationship to the ruling power. “His willingness to remain when that power is withdrawn will be a demonstration of his disinterested desire to serve India.” Time alone will show whether the new government will place restrictions on the Christian's right to win men for Christ, but there is reason to hope that freedom to preach will be granted.

L. BEVAN JONES.

The Difficulty of Faith, by Douglas Stewart. (S.C.M., 3s. 6d.)

In this little book the author sets out to explain why religious faith has become so difficult for modern men. The question is urgent because humanism as a way of life is obviously failing, and the man in difficulty wants to know, “How can I change myself from an irreligious man into a religious one?” To answer that question, says Mr. Stewart, we must first of all consider what God is like, a theme which, in contrast to Descartes' *Cogito ergo sum*, he expounds on the basis of God's words to Moses in Exodus iii, 14: “I Am That I Am.” In other words, the God of the Bible is personally and eternally present. He is the Living God who reveals Himself to man and is active in creation, in history, and in Jesus Christ. “Faith” then, is nothing less than “the response of a man's entire personality to the Living God.” Such a response is constantly being misconceived as chiefly intellectual or

emotional. But faith is in fact, a thoroughly normal and all-round activity of the human personality. And the problem of believing is essentially that of "removing or dealing with that in your life or nature which is inhibiting you and preventing the free and natural flow of your mind and heart towards the truth and the love of God" (p. 51).

From this point onwards the trend of Mr. Stewart's argument in the book is sufficiently clear, and he deals helpfully in turn with various types of intellectual and emotional difficulties, ending with a chapter on Sin as the core of man's resistance to God and as located in the will. The book is written with knowledge and penetration, and manifests a real desire to help men back to a firm foothold in the things of the faith. As such it is to be heartily welcomed, although it would have been even more effective for its purpose had the author succeeded in maintaining a consistent stance vis-a-vis his readers. As it is, the changes of meaning implied in the use of the pronoun "we" are so frequent and varied that the effect on the reader is apt to be rather puzzling.

R. L. CHILD.

The Faithfulness of God. Bethel English Baptist Church, Maesteg 1847-1947. (Kingsgate Press, 1/6).

This is a carefully prepared and well illustrated centenary booklet of 36 pages. It is unpretentious and there are few "high lights" in the story, though "John Thomas of Liverpool" was a son of the Maesteg Church. But it is Christian fellowships such as this that are the real core and strength of the denomination.