

Reviews.

The Object of Christian Worship, by R. F. Aldwinckle, B.A., D.Th.

It is good to find Baptist Union Scholars making such good use of their post-graduate opportunities as Dr. Aldwinckle has clearly made at Strasbourg. His thesis for the degree of *Docteur en Théologie* has been published at the price of 5s., and copies may be obtained from the author at 6a, Meadow Close, Clacton-on-Sea. It is to be hoped that many ministers will obtain copies, for the subject which Dr. Aldwinckle treats is of first-class importance for religious thought and life to-day.

He considers the criticisms directed by certain sociological and psychological schools against the validity of Christian experience. Durkheim's claim that religious experience can be explained and accounted for by reference to social forces, and the attitude common in some psychological circles, reducing religious experience to the result of auto-suggestion in the individual and of mob-psychology in the crowd, and God to a projection of the mind, are carefully considered and cogently refuted. Dr. Aldwinckle sees the conflict as that, ultimately, between two rival philosophies, "one of which claims to be based on facts of a scientific order, but which in its positive declarations goes far beyond the limited field of the scientist: the other equally basing itself upon indisputable facts of a spiritual and moral order which have been renewed from age to age in the lives of Christian men and women".

Thus he is led to consider the relation of speculative philosophy to religion, the significance of mind, the nature of scientific knowledge, and the nature of morality. Drawing freely on the views of distinguished modern writers, he also takes account of the results of the comparative study of religion. His conclusion is that the existence of the Object of Christian worship is rationally guaranteed by a series of converging evidences. He offers us three guiding assumptions (which he justifies): "the specificity of religious experience and its implication of a personal relationship with a personal Being or beings, the legitimacy of using the category of personality and the notion of intelligent purpose for metaphysical explanation, and the possibility of a speculative philosophy that is not mere myth-making." Yet metaphysical speculation is only a kind of diving

board from which we must plunge into the world of action. When the philosopher has said his last word, we discover that something more is necessary if we are to link together the sinful, corrupted world and the divine, eternal world of perfection. Using Brunner's phrase, Dr. Aldwinckle declares that Christ is the bridge between these two realms. With Him we may link the two realms together, not by any intellectual blindness, nor in any human pride, but in the conviction that "He Who calls us to Himself through Jesus Christ is the same God Who created us . . . and Who has guided this human drama of ours . . . to the glorious shame and victory of the Cross, leaving us now to live in the assured hope of the day when all things shall have been subjected unto Christ."

In comparatively small compass, Dr. Ardwinckle has dealt with a very big theme, and not the least of the merits of his treatment is that it suggests fruitful lines of inquiry for all who would find a true basis both for Christian belief and its expression in life.

F. TOWNLEY LORD.

The Minister: His World and His Work, by William Adams Brown, Ph.D., D.D., S.T.D. (T. & T. Clark, 7s. net.)

There can hardly be any more important subject than this, since the minister's work is essential to the work of the church, and it was never more perplexing than it is to-day. Moreover, Dr. Adams Brown is a well-known theologian with many contacts with the religious life of the world. He himself appreciates to the full the importance of the ordinary minister. "The parish minister," he says, "in the last analysis must be the interpreter to his people of the function of the Church in our modern world." Dr. Brown devotes four chapters to the Minister's World and five to the Minister's Work. In the latter section he discusses the Minister as Priest (or, as he explains the term, man of God), Evangelist, Teacher, Pastor and Churchman. It will thus be seen that the book deals with the main aspects of the subject. The book was written for American ministers, though that need not necessarily be a fault, but it contains too many references to previous books and articles written or edited by Dr. Brown, and hence it has the appearance of patchiness here and there. Further, Dr. Brown is a seminary teacher, and hence his knowledge of real pastoral work is not intimate. He spends a good deal of his space in this section on the subject of peace and war, whereas in pastoral work the issues as a rule are more intimate and personal. What is needed here is direction by a working pastor as to how best to make this most vital part of

the minister's work effective. One could have wished for a stronger emphasis on the need for what we used to describe as "the passion for souls." Dr. Brown sees the need for this, but he hardly stresses it enough. It is only the flaming soul that can save the world to-day. Ideas are not enough, and unless as ministers we can recapture for our preaching and pastoral work the utter self-abandonment of the great evangelists and missionaries we shall never win our world. Dr. Brown's book, nevertheless, is full of helpful suggestions. There is much in it that we might all usefully ponder, and the study of it would do any minister good.

HENRY COOK.

The Work of Christ, by P. T. Forsyth, D.D., with a Foreword by John S. Whale, M.A., D.D., and a Memoir by Jessie Forsyth Andrews. (Independent Press, 4s. 6d.)

This volume consists of lectures delivered to the Mundesley Conference almost thirty years ago. The years since their first publication have served to heighten the importance of the things Forsyth says here, and elsewhere as well. If this re-issue stimulates fresh interest in his theology it will render a great service. Forsyth had something of vital significance to say to his generation and ours. He had revolted from what he saw as a dangerous theological liberalism, anticipating in that respect much that is happening to-day to make the liberal evangelical tradition, the "modernism" of yesterday, an outworn or inadequate faith, at least in some of its aspects. He spoke and wrote with burning conviction and urgency about the centrality of the Cross, its necessity to the holiness of God and the need of man. For some reason his message did not gain the attention its significance deserved. Whether his style, which makes considerable demands on his readers, was responsible, or whether the mood of the generation to which he spoke made it unready for what he had to say, so that only the discerning had ears to hear, it was certainly a loss to his time that the note he struck found so little acceptance.

What he says here goes to the very heart of the Christian faith. It grapples majestically with the immensities of the atonement; stressing the fact that the work of Christ is an act of the Divine initiative in costly reconciliation, as against any view that makes reconciliation merely the result of our human response to the gracious disposition of God. And whether Forsyth is right in making such a reconciliation the master key to the interpretation of Christ's death, there is no adequate understanding of the work of Christ that fails to take account of it.

The book is full of acute judgments, as relevant now as when they were written. In chapter one there are wise words about the essential greatness of the Church and its weakness in the modern situation. Again, in his insistence that salvation is personal but not individual, and that the Reformation was a Charter of personal faith as against institutional, but not of individual independence, he supplies a needed corrective to that individualism that so dangerously invades some of our protestant thinking, and which in another sphere has produced the totalitarian State as a reaction from democracy.

The delightful memoir by Mrs. Andrews enriches the book and adds to our knowledge of a truly prophetic soul.

W. TAYLOR BOWIE.

The Great Succession, by Ernest A. Payne, B.A., B.D., B.Litt. (Carey Press, 2s. net.)

Two years ago Mr. Payne issued *The First Generation*, a series of attractive essays in biography dealing with the early leaders of the Baptist Missionary Society in England and India. We are glad he has followed it with this volume, which deals with eleven who were leaders during the nineteenth century. Joseph Angus, Edward Bean Underhill, Alfred Henry Baynes, William Knibb, the ladies whose work influenced the formation of the Zenana Mission, Tom Comber, the unnamed but thinly disguised "Member of the Committee," and others, all big men and women, stalk across the pages and almost offer a new challenge in the interests of their beloved Society. Mr. Payne has an encyclopaedic knowledge of Baptist life and men, and he has used it skilfully to give enrichment to this book. Chapter X., for example, contains a vivid picture of a Nonconformist church of the Victorian era—its ministry and diaconal service—while in chapter VII., speaking of the service of women, he justly points out that "historians have often been blind to the part played by the missionary movement in enabling women to show their mettle and to find scope for independent careers." In heartily commending this volume, we express the hope that Mr. Payne will find time to write of other leaders and thus complete a trilogy of absorbing interest.

Heroes of the Faith, by Henry Cook, M.A. (Student Christian Movement Press, 5s. net.)

Mr. Cook holds that no empire, no institution of any sort anywhere, can produce a record that is in any way comparable to the muster roll of the Heroes of the Church—the best and noblest men and women that have ever lived, whose names cannot

be read without a thrill of pride and a sense of deepened devotion to Christ. And in this compelling book he conveys to paper that sense of thrill and wonder. There are four parts: Some Early Martyrs, Some Early Missionaries, Some Teachers and Some Saints, and each contains five or six studies preceded by a brief introduction dealing with the particular problem that the Church was called upon to face at the time. Mr. Cook's vivid pen-pictures almost cover the Christian centuries, and the volume therefore provides an admirable introduction to the story of the Church. Just the gift for a Sunday School teacher or lay preacher.

My Bank Book, a treasury of devotion, compiled and arranged by Charles F. Perry, with introduction by Hugh Redwood. (Kingsgate Press, 1s. 6d. net.)

This book, "especially for busy people and travellers," is tastefully produced in the form of a bank pass book, and contains a scripture portion and prayer for each week. They are carefully selected and arranged, and the book should prove popular. But let it not be thought—and this is the danger of the book—that one short Bible passage and one brief prayer per week are sufficient nourishment for the Christian life.

The Fourfold Message, arranged and annotated by C. C. Ogilvy Van Lennep (Marshall, Morgan and Scott, Ltd., 10s. 6d. net).

A complete and useful conspectus of the four gospels, with notes.

God's Way with Men, by F. Cowell Lloyd, A.T.S. (Kingsgate Press, 6d.).

Three short studies, with photographs of the author and East Queen Street church.

The Romance of Evangelism, by Hugh C. C. McCullough (Marshall, Morgan and Scott, Ltd., 2s. 6d. net).

Evangelistic experiences in the valleys, the city, on the road and the continent.

The Bible, 400 years after 1538, by G. Campbell Morgan, D.D. (Marshall, Morgan and Scott, Ltd., 3s. 6d. net).

Fourteen chapters consisting "largely of the gathering up of fragments" into a book which the author says "is almost certain to be ephemeral."