

Reviews

The Background of the New Testament and its Eschatology, Studies in Honour of C. H. Dodd. Ed. by W. D. Davies and D. Daube. (Cambridge University Press, 70s.).

The publication of this outstanding volume will have given pleasure to all friends and old students of Professor Dodd. It is a worthy tribute to the international repute and respect which he has gained for his rich scholarship and lucid power of exposition. Scholars from eight lands have made their contribution, and the contents of almost every essay reveal the significance of Dodd's work in the field of New Testament studies. The editors' open letter, which serves as a preface, is a moving tribute which will evoke echoes in many minds.

The book consists of twenty-six essays, planned to cover the areas in which Dodd's work chiefly lay. In such a composite work unity is sometimes limited to the general title, but here the editors have succeeded in achieving a much greater internal unity than usual, particularly in the second part of the volume.

To write a brief notice which can do justice to the compass and quality of this volume is virtually impossible; to single out one or two essays would seem invidious. There remains the task of giving as many glimpses as possible, however brief.

Ten essays are grouped under the title "Towards an understanding of the Background of the N.T." A salutary reminder is given in the opening essay by E. C. Blackman ("The Task of Exegesis") that theological interpretation is the true goal and that historical investigation is but a means to that end. The task of the expositor is not simply to clarify the original meaning of a passage but to relate it to Christ and to the central Biblical doctrine of salvation and to the modern situation.

In an important article on "The Effect of recent Textual Criticism on New Testament Studies," K. W. Clark sees the present era as one of collecting and reclassifying of old and new material as a foundation for a fresh apparatus criticus and a revised text. In "Gnosis, Gnosticism and the New Testament," R. P. Casey is critical of the views which see Gnosticism as a significant factor in the origin of Christianity. Their lines seem to cross in places, but the explanation of this is a common heritage of Greek ideas and in part indebtedness of Gnostics to the N.T. "The remarkable thing about the earliest Christian literature is not what it perpetuated but what it created." H. Riesenfeld ("The Mythical Background of New Testament Christology") examines the various elements and motifs in Jewish Messianology in relation to our Lord's consciousness of His mission and attributes to Him a creative process involving selection, combination and transformation. But while it is necessary to examine the components of Christology in order to interpret the intentions of Jesus, "the most sublime and essential result of the creative process is the conception of the mission of Christ in its entirety."

Other essays are F. C. Grant's "The Economic Background of the New Testament," a valuable survey, H. J. Schoep's "Die ebionitische Wahrheit des Christentums," W. D. Davies's "Reflections on Archbishop Carrington's 'The Primitive Christian Calendar'," a criticism of the theory that the Gospel tradition was moulded by a very early lectionary scheme, Matthew Black on "The Account of the Essenes in Hippolytus and Josephus," and P. Katz on "Septuagintal Studies in the Mid-century."

One of the outstanding essays is that of W. F. Albright on "Recent Discoveries in Palestine and the Gospel of St. John," in which he develops his view that the Aramaic 'colour' of that gospel is due, not to a written

Aramaic original but to the transmission of oral tradition in Aramaic. The persecutions of Christians in the decade 60-70 could have led many to seek refuge outside Palestine. This probability, he urges, would be strengthened if the gospel reveals data which is validated by topographical and archaeological research. The essay attempts this validation and concludes that the basic material of John dates back to Palestinian oral tradition before 70, then transmitted for a decade or two prior to being written down.

The second part of the volume is concerned with the Eschatology of the N.T., and here the influence of Dodd's work is most manifest. T. W. Manson introduces it with an essay on "The Life of Jesus: some Tendencies in Present-day Research." He examines the two outstanding tendencies of recent years, Form Criticism and Realized Eschatology. When the former, a literary tool, began to be used as a means of historical judgments, it led to a scepticism in the train of Wrede. "The Wredestrasse is the road to nowhere." The alternative road, that of Schweitzer's thoroughgoing eschatology, if followed to the end, could be as misleading. In effect the thing that mattered for Schweitzer was what in his theory was the least significant, the 'interimsethik.' Manson shows how, following the direction of Schweitzer's signpost, but early deviating from that road, the course of N.T. studies has opened a promising vista. "There is no escape from historical enquiry," he concludes, "and there is no need to be despondent about its prospects."

There follows a series of studies of the eschatology of different parts of the New Testament; on *Matthew G. Bornkamm*—"Endwartung und Kirche in Matthauevangelium," and A. Feuillet—"Le sens du mot Parousie dans l'Evangile de Matthieu." Feuillet argues that in contrast with the usual N.T. concept of the word of the final manifestation of Christ at the end of world history, Parousia is identified in *Matthew* with the divine judgment on the Jewish people, and he finds this sense confirmed in *James* v. 1-11. E. Stauffer—"Agnostos Christos"—finds in *John* ii. 24 a neglected but important key to the better understanding of the eschatology of this gospel. Maurice Goguel and H. Clavier write on Pauline eschatology, C. K. Barrett on *Hebrews*, E. G. Selwyn on *1 Peter*.

In a brief essay "The Bible Today' und die Eschatologie" Bultmann pays tribute to the work of Dodd, but in a series of questions to the author offers a criticism of his treatment of the relation of Revelation and History. O. Cullmann ("Eschatologie and Missions in the N.T.") repudiates the view that Christianity became missionary because it had renounced eschatology when its hopes seemed to be unfulfilled. In fact the Christian mission is an essential part of the divine eschatological plan of salvation. The essay contains an interesting discussion on the difficult passage in *2 Thessalonians* regarding the Restraining Power. Space precludes extended reference to significant essays on the Church as the "new creation" in the light of the realized eschatology of the N.T. (N. A. Dahl), and on the Sacraments an anticipation of the Final Judgment (C. F. D. Moule).

In the concluding essay—"Kerygma, Eschatology and Social Ethics"—A. N. Wilder discusses the relevance of modern N.T. studies for a social ethic. The pressure of external events creates a pressing demand upon the Church for moral leadership to human society. Problems of social ethics have become central in many theological discussions. On the other hand Prof. Wilder points out that some emphases in the latest Biblical theology tend to militate against a Christian social ethic. There is the tendency to give to the "kerygma" an excessively individualistic interpretation which to Wilder has a resemblance to the older pietism. And going further, there is the view that there can be no such thing as a systematic Christian ethic, a view which N. H. Soc, supported by Barth, regards as "not only wrong but dangerous." Wilder concludes that the N.T. in general and Paul in particular, offer at the very centre of their message a theological basis for social-cultural action. "The drama in which the Church Militant is engaged must

not be theologized into an other-worldly abstraction or a banal version of the moral struggle of the individual." We hope that these brief references will show what a rich mine is here for the student.

W. S. DAVIES

The Faith of Israel, by H. H. Rowley. (S.C.M. Press, 18s.).

This book now offers to the general public the James Sprunt Lectures delivered at Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Virginia, in 1955. We are grateful for their speedy publication, and much more grateful for the material they contain. Professor Rowley mentions in the Preface that they had to be prepared within a short time. However, there is no indication of this in the book, which is obviously the product of intensive study and prolonged reflection on a subject which has warmed the lecturer's heart. This work, in the interests of the general reader, has avoided excessive footnoting, although the scale of this is still reasonably lavish and numerous references to fuller bibliography in the author's other publications adequately extend the field of investigation for the specialist. In the Introduction Professor Rowley indicates the limits of the book; its subject is Old Testament theology rather than a history of Israel's religion, which would cover "every religious idea and practice"; and even within this narrower field the limited number of lectures has restricted the choice of the aspects of Old Testament thought to be considered. These are, Revelation and its Media, The Nature of God, The Nature and Need of Man, Individual and Community, The Good Life, Death and Beyond, and The Day of the Lord. To these subjects some 180 pages are devoted.

What is unique in Biblical revelation is a combination of historical and personal factors which dovetail into one another. This is evident in the crises of Israel's history but is seen most clearly in the Passion of Christ. The distinctive elements of Israel's doctrine of God lie in His moral attributes: compassion, justice, love, holiness, faithfulness and free-will (leading to election). Her monotheism is the gift of revelation, begun in Moses and continued in the prophets. Through his being created in God's image, man has spiritual kinship with God and so the possibility of real fellowship with Him. Sin isolates man from his Maker, but God readily responds to man's desire for the restoration of fellowship by exercising his divine power to remove the barrier which man has erected. The relationship between the individual and the community is admirably summarized: "In the true faith of Israel every man was his brother's keeper, and his brother was every man." The prophets conceived of religion in terms of fellowship as well as ethics, and the good life is the life that is lived in harmony with God's will. The well-known words of *Job* in ch. xix. vv. 25ff. may possibly be the "bold suggestion" of, rather than "a formulated faith" in resurrection after death. In *Isaiah* xxv. 8, however, there is no thought of *individual* resurrection, but *Daniel* xii. 2, has a clear and undisputed reference to the resurrection of the dead. In the Psalter there is a "glimpse" of an after-life in the presence of God, e.g. in *Pss.* xlix. 14ff.; lxxiii. 23f.; xvi. 11. Universalism was part of Israel's faith long before the time of Deutero-Isaiah, who related it to the mission of Israel.

These sentences must suffice to give some indication of the scope of the book, but only the reading of it can convey the discriminating thought and balanced judgment of the author. In one footnote Professor Rowley informs us that one of his audience challenged a statement in the lectures. Some of his readers may occasionally put a small question mark in the margin. But far more pages are likely to be marked for a second reading. If there are still those among us who doubt whether sound, critically biblical scholarship can be evangelically stimulating, let them read this book. And every lover of the Old Testament may read it with joy and profit.

GEORGE FARR

The Southern Convention, 1945-1953, by William Wright Barnes. (Broadman Press, \$3.75); *History of the Christian Church in the West*, by Barton Warren Stone. (The College of the Bible, Lexington, 50 cents); *A. G. Matthews' Walker Revised, Supplementary Index of "Intruders" and Others*, by Charles E. Surman. (Dr. Williams's Trust, 3s. 9d.).

Dr. Barnes, Research Professor in Baptist History at Southwestern Theological Seminary, describes his book as "The First History of a Great Denomination." Southern Baptists constitute at the present time one of the largest, most self-conscious and vigorous groups of Christians anywhere in the world and the organization which unites and directs their activities is correspondingly powerful and important. Some record of its growth and development is timely. The author has not had to contend with the difficulties facing the earliest Baptist historians in this country, nor with the problems which will confront anyone who tries to put together the history of the Baptist Union. The Southern Convention was not formed until 1845, when it had become customary to keep full records and minutes, and when denominational periodicals and biographies were already numerous. The ten pages of bibliography indicate the wealth of material at the disposal of Dr. Barnes. His task—and no light one—has been to reduce this to some kind of order and to make clear the salient features of the story, which began with a gathering in Augusta, Georgia, attended by 293 Baptists representing nine states and 166 churches, and ends with the 1952 Convention in Miami, at which there were nearly 11,000 registrations, the Convention then uniting 28,865 churches with a total membership of over 7,600,000.

A "General Missionary Convention of the Baptist Denomination in the United States of America for Foreign Missions" was formed in 1814. It was composed of individuals, not of representatives of state conventions or of associations. Some of the leaders wished to transform this into a comprehensive denominational body, but there was opposition. The Baptists of the Northern States favoured separate and distinct organizations for each particular phase of work—foreign missions, home missions, education, etc. The Southerners preferred centralized thinking and action. Then came the slavery issue on which Northerners and Southerners took different sides. The result was the organization of the Southern Baptist Convention, firmly based on the churches and associations, and with provision in its constitution for a full denominational programme.

Dr. Barnes divides his story as follows: (1) 1845-60, during which the Convention gained in momentum, though the emphasis continued to be mainly on foreign missions; (2) 1860-65, a period of disruption due to the American Civil War; (3) 1865-79, an era of reconstruction, at the close of which it became clear the the Northern and Southern Baptists would continue to be organized separately; (4) 1879-99, two decades which saw the steady development of home missions of their own by Southern Baptists and resistance to infiltration from the North; (5) 1899-1919, during which horizons widened and new relationships were worked out between the various boards of the Convention and between the Convention itself and the state organizations; (6) 1919-46, a period during which church membership and Sunday School enrolments were nearly trebled, many new developments took place and denominational self-consciousness increased; and (7) 1946-53, a further period of expansion, described in a brief supplementary chapter by Dr. Porter Routh.

In the course of this development there were a number of internal crises. There were anti-missionary trends to be overcome. There were those who challenged the authority of the Convention. There were disputes over what constitutes the right kind of "succession" in religious life and organization. The Convention was nearly split in the 1850s by "Landmarkism" (with its exaggerated emphasis on the primacy of the local church), in the 1880s by "Gospel Missionism" (which urged that missionaries overseas

should live like natives) and in the 1890s by the stand of Dr. Whitsitt for inductive methods of historical study. Dr. Barnes gives details of all these disputes. Non-American readers may sometimes find it difficult to see the wood for the trees, but they will find the references they need for further study. They will also find here information about the Sunday School work, theological training and educational activities which have been important features of the work of the Convention in recent decades.

The chapters on relations with other Baptist bodies and with non-Baptist bodies are of special interest. Unfortunately, since Dr. Barnes wrote, there has been increasing tension between the Southern and the Northern (now American) Conventions. Although ready to participate in 1911, the Southern Convention later declined the invitation to join the Faith and Order movement. It was represented at the Oxford and Edinburgh Conferences in 1937 but refused to join the World Council of Churches on the ground that the Convention has "no ecclesiological authority." It describes itself in 1940 as "a voluntary association of Baptists for the purpose of eliciting, combining and directing the energies of our denomination in missionary activity at home and abroad, and in educational and benevolent work throughout the world." How long Southern Baptists will be able to avoid facing the theological issues which are raised as soon as local Christian fellowships combine and which are multiplied when their combination creates an extremely powerful central body, remains to be seen. In the meantime Baptists in all parts of the world will be grateful to Dr. Barnes for the material he has gathered and for the careful documentation he has provided. Later historians will have to relate his story more closely to contemporary American history and to the general religious developments of the past century.

Dr. Barnes refers incidentally to the activities of Alexander Campbell, the early leader of the Disciples and quotes the lengthy but negative reply sent by the Southern Convention in 1894 to a fraternal communication from the General Convention of Disciples. In the pamphlet, *History of the Christian Church in the West*, there is reprinted an interesting series of articles written in 1827 by Barton Stone about a Kentucky movement, of which he was the leader and which later merged with the Campbellites. The writer was clearly a man of strong convictions, deep personal piety and a real concern for Christian unity.

Mr. Surman—well-known for his work for the Congregational Historical Society—has provided a most useful, indeed essential, supplementary index to A. G. Matthews's edition of Walker's *Sufferings of the Clergy*.

ERNEST A. PAYNE

Evangelical Nonconformists and Higher Criticism in the 19th Century, by Willis B. Glover, Jr. (Independent Press, 17s. 6d.).

This interesting and well documented book is really concerned with the problem how a really evangelical faith may be combined with a critical attitude to Holy Scripture, and it deals with this problem by a historical survey of the impact of Higher Criticism on religious Victorian England. The problem is still with us, for either faith or the critical attitude gains the ascendancy or else faith and criticism become separated, which is quite a bad.

Dr. Glover begins with the Reformation doctrine of the supremacy though not the inerrancy of Scripture and shows how evangelical faith at first fell victim to the Roman doctrine of inerrancy. Then gradually the later evangelicals under the influences of the middle Victorian age gradually renounced inerrancy and opened the way for Higher Criticism. Even so the movement had a bad start, because it appeared as the ally of forces that were humanist, rationalist and foreign—"the German poison," Spurgeon

called it. Soon, however, Higher Criticism became a challenge when it was seen to be advocated by devout Christians and by convinced Evangelicals. From a wide survey of contemporary literature of all kinds and by reference to outstanding personalities and events of the closing decades of the 19th century, Dr. Glover illustrates his thesis and proves his case. No one can fail to be interested in the information he gives, the sources he quotes and the great names with whom he deals. His treatment of the latter day traditionalists is fair, and he advances the view that whereas before 1890 the Anglicans had the lead in Biblical scholarship, since then and especially in the 20th century they "have been surpassed in critical scholarship by the representatives of the Free Churches."

The reference on p. 262 to Norman Henry Smith should probably read Snaith. There is no evidence that Higher Criticism affected women at all. Also I missed any reference to the meaning of Higher Criticism in terms of the adjective. An explanation of the word "Higher" would remove a good deal of prejudice against the title.

Altogether this is an interesting book which leads up to the question of vital faith and critical method. The historical chapter on the Problem of Authority contains many acute observations, and is helpful in its estimate of P. T. Forsyth. Dr. Glover shows the clue to the problem of Higher Criticism. It is possible to be both a Higher Critic and an Evangelical. It is probably true to say that Baptists have been slower to learn that lesson than most of the other Free Churches.

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