

Reviews.

Calvinism and Evangelism, by Dr. W. T. Whitley. (Kingsgate Press, 1s. 6d. net.)

Dr. Whitley continues to place us in his debt by his careful and illuminating researches into ecclesiastical history. Addressing himself to the difficulty of reconciling evangelism with the theological conception of election he traces the course of Calvinism in England. He emphasises, on the one hand, the strength of Calvinism, with special reference to the Baptist tradition, and, on the other, very definite evangelism and missionary activity. He remarks upon the slowness with which some minds draw conclusions from their beliefs, and how often a theoretical creed lags behind the practical life. His knowledge of the byways of English church life is amazing, and he gives the impression that he is only briefly touching movements and tendencies which he could illustrate in great detail. The present little volume is a most important contribution to Baptist thought, and in a closing chapter Dr. Whitley suggests some of the modern approaches to the problem. He ventures the opinion that the intellectual difficulties which have proved insoluble for generations, the difficulties of reconciling freedom with fore-ordination, may be resolved in the wider views of modern knowledge.

Congregational Hymn-Singing in England, by W. T. Whitley. (J. M. Dent & Sons, 5s.)

If you are not acquainted with the debt we owe to the Church for the cultivation and development of music, buy this book and read it carefully; and if you happen to know all about it, which is unlikely, this book will refresh your memory and add to your understanding. Dr. Whitley enters upon a new rôle with a book of this kind, in which his theological learning and historical powers frequently reach a high level. The subject is handled with the care of a historian and the grace of an artist. The closing chapter on "Recent thought and tendency in congregational singing" by Dr. Thiman ought to be in the hands of every responsible person in the ordering of the worship of God in His house of prayer and praise. Is there not an urgent

need in our own times to find an order of worship where the singing is ever an act of praise, and the praying is the united voice of the people speaking unto the Lord?

The Testament of Glory and other Johannine Studies, by Gwilym O. Griffith. (Student Christian Movement Press, 3s. 6d. net.)

Fortunately Mr. Griffith did not finish with Mazzini when he wrote his *Life*, for illustrations from him are found on the third and last pages of these delightful studies. The author modestly suggests that the studies are hardly more than disconnected sketches, and hints at the desire "to fill them out and work them into some sort of unity." We hope the "wanting opportunity" will soon be found, but meanwhile we are grateful for this wonderfully suggestive volume. The main essay deals with the Gospel, "a memorial poem, a prose poem, a Testament of Glory," a book that "we must not interpret as if it had its beginnings in philosophic or mystic thought; it began with a human attachment which came to be lit up by a great glory, a glory which St. John beheld and wanted all mankind to behold together." Mr. Griffith describes St. John as an artist in portraiture with the ability to convey a character in a single spoken line or reveal it in a simple symbolic act. He himself has something of the same gift.

The second study, equally revealing but much shorter, is on "St. John Himself," and two Johannine Notes close the book, one on the Elect Lady and the other on the well-beloved Gaius. Any deacon wishing to show appreciation to his minister for a sermon above the average in helpfulness would find this book a welcome and acceptable gift. Sermons from St. John's Gospel would probably result but they should be worth hearing.

Christ on the Road, by F. Townley Lord, D.D. (Marshall, Morgan & Scott, Ltd., 2s. 6d.)

"The Road" has become a popular phrase in Christian exposition. It reminds us of Stanley Jones' *Christ of the Indian Road* which inspired, or perhaps more accurately was the excuse for, so many addresses on "Christ of the *London Road*" (or the road of the particular town in which the speaker dwelt). The phrase is a good one and has the added virtue of being true to the New Testament and to life. Running through the New Testament there are several well-laid and well-travelled roads—Jericho, Bethany, Emmaus, Samaria, Damascus, Galilee. Dr. Lord traverses them with intimate sympathy, but he does not walk in footprints already there. He uses his own eyes and

makes his own track, so that the ancient highways of Palestine become vivid, and we find that, in thought and experience, they have much to say concerning the modern road with its conflict, opportunity, discovery and influence. The wrapper of the book justly claims that "travellers on life's dusty road will find in these studies the charm and stimulus of Christ's companionship."

London's Oldest Baptist Church, by E. F. Kevan. (Kingsgate Press.)

The Church now worshipping at Church Hill, Walthamstow, has celebrated the tercentenary of its foundation in a permanent and valuable way by the publication of its history, ably compiled by the present minister, Ernest F. Kevan. Several members of the Independent congregation gathered under the pastorate of Henry Jacob and later that of John Lathorp, "being convinced that baptism was not to be administered to infants, but such only as professed faith in Christ, desired that they might be dismissed from that communion, and allowed to form a distinct congregation." This was the beginning of London's first Baptist Church, formed in Wapping in 1633. Among its earliest members were some who suffered imprisonment for their faith, and Mr. Kevan's survey shows that the sturdy spirit of the beginning was maintained through the succeeding years. He shows clearly the importance of this early church, and speaks with pride of its great men. The list is indeed an imposing one. Collins, John Spilsbury, William Kiffin, John Norcott, Abraham Booth, Samuel Wilson, Joseph Gutteridge, Charles Stovel, William and Alfred Bowser. This book is a model of what such a survey should be; it is written against the background of historic movements, it throws many a sidelight on Baptist church life during the three centuries, it emphasizes the permanent elements in our Baptist heritage. The Walthamstow Church is to be congratulated not only on its splendid record, but also on its able pastor and historian.

N.B.—The Church is holding special meetings, September 9-17, 1933. These should attract all Baptists; while Free Churches of all shades may well attend.

The Society is supplying a copy of this work to all its Guinea Subscribers.