

Reviews.

UPTON: The story of one hundred and fifty years, 1785-1935. 201 pages, appendices, index, twelve illustrations, by Seymour J. Price (Carey Press, 2s. 6d. and 5s.)

What a story! and how well told! The Church and its founder have been unduly obscured. After 45 years Ivimey gave less than half a page, saying nothing of the Church, and only the ordination of the first minister. Yet in the next year, James Upton was chosen the first regular chairman of the Baptist Union, and in 1835 the Baptist Magazine showed that Blackfriars was easily the largest Church in London. Outsiders may be forgiven if they have been slow to recognise the importance of the place; henceforth they have the opportunity of reading an inspiring tale of a Church adjusting itself to every change, still attracting and producing fine leaders. It began on a green walk leading south from Blackfriars to St. George's Fields, across marshland; and despite the filling up of the marsh, the New Cut, the laying out of streets till Lambeth is a most crowded borough, the Church has been faithful to the district. How church life has developed can be readily traced, from the day of a six-hour ordination service, to the weeks of sixteen meetings, many indeed double-banked; with open-air meetings for evangelism, cricket, swimming and football.

The first pastor had the joy of sending ten members into the ministry, and linked the church with every denominational enterprise. For the first time we have a worthy life of a man who started as an Essex shop-boy, educated himself, and died as a Baptist leader, bequeathing sons and a grandson to tread in his footsteps.

Sketches of other pastors are given, and the Church cherishes the recent memory of William Williams. There are sketches of deacons, officers, precentor, organist—why not of the care-takers? for another Church has just honoured one with the first tablet on its walls. The centenary was celebrated with a report showing sixty baptized in the year. The sesqui-centennial is celebrated with this volume, which is not only most readable and humorous, but may show other churches in dense godless areas how to take courage and win for God.

W.T.W.

My Life's Little Day, by John C. Carlile, C.H., D.D. (Blackie, 6s.)

Dr. Carlile's autobiography is very welcome, partly for the author's sake and partly for the world of personalities and movements in which, for half a century, he has played a very active

part. He sets out to use his own personality "as a peg upon which to hang memories of men and movements, representing much of the religious and social life of the last half century." This does not mean that his own personality is obscured. He stands out in this most interesting narrative as a preacher, writer, social worker, and ecclesiastical statesman. He is to be envied his wide range of friendships, and his first-hand contacts with the main religious and social movements of the past half century. His book is not only pleasant to read but illuminating and instructive to a marked degree. He takes us through the fascinating story of the major movements of the nineteenth century social rebellion, the clash of the evangelical gospel with advanced social and economic views, the education controversy. He recounts for us the attempts at Church Union, and for Baptists his description of our denominational life during the present century is most valuable. This book may be specially commended to young Baptists, who would learn something of the forces which have gone to the making of the present situation, both in religion and world affairs. And if they share the experience of the present writer, they will be enriched by the tone of Dr. Carlile's survey.

One suggestion may be made. Should the book go to a second edition, an index would add to its value.

F.T.L.

Christmas Evans, 1766-1838, by E. Ebrard Rees. (Kingsgate Press, 3s. 6d.)

This volume is in good time for 1938, the centenary of the death of Christmas Evans, when there will doubtless be a spate of books, articles and oratory. The story is well told, and the times vividly portrayed. Christmas is revealed in his strength, when thousands flocked to hear him and he could sway the multitude, and in his weakness, for the author has not hesitated to paint the warts. The great preacher belonged to an age that has gone, and it is doubtful if the *hwyl* would move men to-day: nevertheless, his story has lessons and inspiration for the twentieth century.

The Gospel Standard, Vol. I, 1835 *fac simile* reprint for the Centenary, (2s.); *Selected Sermons*, by J. C. Philpot, M.A., (4s. 6d.); *Out of the Depths* being the Autobiography of John Newton (3s.). All published by C. J. Farncombe & Sons, Ltd.

Here are three volumes issued by the Gospel Standard section of the Baptist denomination. The *Gospel Standard* has an honourable record of 100 years' service, a length of continuous publication exceeded by few, if any, Baptist magazines.

In celebration of the centenary, Vol. No. 1, comprising the five issues from August to December, 1835, has been reprinted, and probably many of our readers will be glad to add this interesting souvenir to their libraries. It was a happy centennial thought also to issue a volume of J. C. Philpot's sermons. He was one of the Seceders from the Established Church, and, later, for twenty years, editor of the *Gospel Standard*. It is well known that his sermons and writings on the Eternal Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ were the origin of the unfortunate cleavage between those who are known respectively as "Gospel Standard" and "Earthen Vessel" Baptists. The third volume is a reprint of a Christian classic.

The Story of our Colleges, 1835-1935, by W. Bardsley Brash, M.A., B.Lit., B.D. (Epworth Press, 3s. 6d.).

Mr. Bardsley Brash has written a delightful centenary history of Methodist Ministerial Training, skilfully weaving the disconnected details into a harmonious whole. John Wesley believed in a trained ministry, and saw to it that his preachers were guided in their reading; yet at the second Conference, in 1745, the answer to the question "Can we have a seminary for labourers yet?" was "Not till God give us a proper tutor." And ninety years were to pass before the opening of the first seminary. The early attempts to establish a ministerial seminary are adequately dealt with, and the volume abounds with sidelights on tutors and students. We like the story of the lovable Percy Ainsworth, crossing the Didsbury quadrangle with a pipe in his mouth, in days when students were not allowed to smoke. Meeting the Governor, he said: "Mr. Green, I do not keep the pipe in my mouth because I wish to be insolent, but because I do not wish to be deceitful."

At a time when our own Regent's Park College is launching its bold and enterprising scheme for building at Oxford in 1938, we read with keen interest the chapter dealing with the establishment of "Wesley House," the Methodist College at Cambridge. Two great-hearted Methodist laymen, Michael Gutteridge and William Greenhalgh, neither of whom had received the benefit of a University education, appreciated the need for a fully equipped ministry, and gave £50,000 and £20,000 respectively. They have given to us, Baptist laymen, an example that, according to our means, we should follow in their stead.

S.J.P.