

Reviews.

Jesus, Paul and the Jews, by James Parkes, Ph.D. (Student Christian Movement Press, 4s. 6d. net.)

Dr. Parkes is well known as an authority on the interpretation of Judaism in its relation to Christianity. His aim in this timely volume is to present "a fairer and therefore more attractive picture of Judaism than is traditional in Christianity," and thus to make it possible for the two great religions to be allies rather than opponents. Both Judaism and Christianity, he declares, stand with their backs to the wall in a world which, when not indifferent to spiritual values, is hostile to positive and absolutist conceptions of truth. Dr. Parkes quotes a responsible leader of the German Christian Student Movement who pointed out publicly that "even if converted, the Jew could not escape Hell, because the curse they invoked on themselves was eternal; but that knowing the mercifulness of God we might just hope that for their conversion they would receive only a *mitis damnatio*—a mitigation of the pains." Such an attitude, we may hope, is extreme and exceptional, but none can deny the urgent need for the clarification of the real relations between earnest Jews and earnest Christians.

It is all to the good, therefore, that Dr. Parkes should bring out a point which is often overlooked, viz. that Pharisaism made valuable contributions to Judaism which are not apparent if we confine ourselves to the well-known denunciations in the Gospels. Dr. Parkes' scholarship is unimpeachable when he declares that the teaching of many of the noblest Pharisees had close affinities with that of Jesus. He reminds us that in the conflict between the schools of Shammai and Hillel in the first century the victory lay with the latter school, always less severe and more liberal in its attitude to life and the Law.

Yet the author's anxiety to do full justice to Judaism at its best leads him into statements which are highly controversial. Is it not altogether too humanistic an explanation of Jesus to say that from the Pharisees "He got not only many of His methods and phrases, but His fundamental conceptions of God and man"? Whatever may have been the Pharisaic attitude in its noblest exponents, we cannot ignore in the Gospel record the very strong critical attitude of Jesus towards the weakness of

contemporary religion. Dr. Parkes would explain this as due to tendencies in those who recorded His ministry; they unconsciously allowed their judgment to be coloured, and conveyed an impression which was fundamentally at variance with the real attitude of Jesus. This leads Dr. Parkes to the view that Jesus Himself neither rejected Judaism nor the Jews. "Nothing," he states, "in the teaching of Jesus made necessary the separation between Judaism and Christianity." Such statements make us wonder whether Dr. Parkes, in his anxiety to be fair at all costs to the best in Judaism, is not rather tending to undervalue the significant newness of the Christian religion. And his treatment of Paul leaves us wondering whether the Epistle to the Romans receives adequate appreciation. How challenging Dr. Parkes' study is will be seen from the last paragraph in the book, which concludes, "Schism has been the lasting tragedy of the history of the Christian Church; but no schism has cut so deep into its spiritual life as that schism by which, while it kept His teaching, it abandoned the religion of its Founder."

Dr. Parkes is (we fancy) intentionally provocative; but it is good to be challenged by one who combines such scholarship, the desire to be fair, and an eagerness to bridge the gulf between those who build their religion on the Old Testament, and those who build their religion on Old and New Testaments together. His treatment of the question has the merit of sending us back to a closer examination of the New Testament.

F. T. L.

Religion and Learning, by Olive M. Griffiths (Cambridge University Press, 12s. 6d. net.)

This volume, which deals competently with the Arian movement of the eighteenth century, is of more than passing interest to the student of Baptist history, as many of the original General Baptist churches lapsed into Unitarianism. Miss Griffiths declares her purpose to be to examine "within a limited period in the history of one movement the influence of contemporary thought upon the changes and developments of theology and religious opinion." She restricts herself to the English Presbyterians from 1662 to the foundation of the Unitarian Movement at the end of the eighteenth century, and under her guidance we see the complex influences through which early Presbyterianism in large measure shed Calvinism for Arminianism, ultimately arriving at the Unitarian position.

The book is divided into four sections, (1) The need and possibility of development after 1662, (2) Formative influence, (3) Development of Presbyterian thought in the eighteenth century, (4) Conclusion. In a valuable chapter on the social effects

of the Clarendon Code, we learn that the wealthier Presbyterians were not so adversely affected by the Penal Laws as might be expected. "Occasional conformity, although they regretted the necessity, was far less difficult for the Presbyterians than for any other dissenting sect, for they never lost their regret and affection for the Established Church." Denied admission to Oxford and Cambridge, they turned to the Scottish Universities and the Universities of Holland, at Utrecht and Leyden. At home and abroad new tendencies in thought faced them, and Miss Griffiths traces the breakdown of Aristotelianism, the relations between the Will and the Intellect, Contemporary Materialism, and finally the evolution of a theology which passed from Arianism to Socinianism and ultimately to Unitarianism. The concluding chapter on Early Nineteenth Century Unitarianism is a penetrating discussion of the problems which faced the new Movement, and probably it is true to say that the "failure of the Unitarians to assimilate the newest developments of thought was certainly due in part to their struggle for existence."

By her painstaking research Miss Griffiths has produced a well-documented volume, which is of value not only for its discussion of eighteenth-century Presbyterianism, but as a study in the development of Christian thought.

Mary Tudor, by Beatrice White (Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 15s. net.)

Our age has sought to "debunk" the Victorians and exalt the Tudors and Stuarts. There was room for a readjustment of values, but now there is danger of the process going too far. Mary Tudor is one to whom the years are proving kind. "Bloody Mary" has been largely forgotten as her life has been more fully understood. In this volume her sombre story is unfolded in the light of her bleak childhood, her persecuted and humiliated adolescence, her suffering and harassed maturity. We think of her with pity as we recall that she was Spanish on her mother's side, brought up in the sensual atmosphere of Henry VIII's establishment, unhappy in her marriage, and bitterly disappointed in her childlessness. Little wonder that she followed the austere example of her mother, Catharine of Aragon, and maintained an uncompromising devotion to Rome. Miss White recognises the defects of this woman, who was to go down to posterity unwept, unhonoured and unsung, but against these she rightly sets forth "her many admirable qualities, her absolute sincerity, her fine integrity, her high courage . . ." Even in her burnings the Queen considered herself God's agent. The book is well illustrated, and its many character studies and records based on State Papers make it a valuable record of the times.

We honour Mary's steadfast adherence to her inherited faith and ideals—but she did send over 300 Protestants to the stake in four years, and at her death England was at a lower ebb than it had been for centuries.

Richard Cromwell, by Robert W. Ramsey (Longmans, Green and Co., 10s. 6d. net.)

Richard Cromwell was no Oliver, not even a faint reflection of him, and six months in the Protector's chair was sufficient for him and the country. His name hardly lives in our national story—school historians dismiss him in few lines—yet there was greatness in his answer to his friends at the moment of crisis, "I will have no blood spilt for me," an answer that might well be commended to twentieth-century dictators.

His life falls naturally into well marked divisions. The years of preparation; the fleeting splendour of the Protectorate; the twenty years of exile; and the closing years in England when, as Mr. Clarke, he lived a life of seclusion, devoted to simple pleasures and acts of kindness, but marred by lawsuits between himself and his daughters. All are dealt with adequately in this work, for which the author has drawn upon the mass of unpublished letters and papers included in the Tangye collection, now in the London Museum or preserved by members of the family. We were already indebted to him for his volumes on Henry Cromwell and Cromwell's Family Circle. This further volume, with its clear picture of Richard, of whom little had been written, confirms his position as one of the leading authorities on the Cromwell family.

Do The Ten Commandments Stand To-day? by J. Parton Milum, B.Sc., Ph.D. (Epworth Press, 3s. 6d. net.)

This is a welcome addition to the excellent "God and Life Series," now being published by the Methodist Church. In ten comparatively brief chapters Dr. Milum interprets the Commandments in their application to modern life, each chapter ending with a summary in which the vital message for this age is clearly outlined. An epilogue, "How does God speak?" is suggestive, and the book is one that will appeal to thoughtful laymen as well as to ministers.

The Church in the Hop Garden, by John Stanley, F.R.Hist.S. (Kingsgate Press, 5s. net.)

This book is obviously a labour of love, its pages full of the elements of romance, drama and tragedy. It represents the fruit of forty years' toil and industry, "spade work, first hand and original," as the author claims. It is no dry-as-dust history, but

a chatty account of a typical country church which has maintained its witness through the centuries, evangelised its district, opened Mission stations, and produced sturdy men and women who have been unwavering in support of their Bethel. "The Church in the Hop Garden" is the Longworth-Coate Baptist Meeting, on the borders of Berkshire and Oxfordshire, and as we read the records we almost feel the bracing breezes from the neighbouring Cotswolds blowing across the pages. Mr. Stanley tells the story as one that is typical of all ancient dissenting communities, and gives intimate sketches of twenty-four ministers and many laymen. In considerable detail he traces the existence of the fellowship back to the days of the Lollards, and supports his suggestions with quotations from State Papers and other appropriate authorities. The Stennetts, Colletts, and others famous in Baptist history, figure prominently; the outstanding war service of the author, in connection with the Romney Street, Westminster, Church, receives well-merited recognition; and the two hundred and fifty pages contain much information of denominational men and events of the past forty years.

The author is aged and sick, and his work was completed under the handicap of physical disabilities. It is not surprising, therefore, that there are minor inaccuracies, which suggest that the book must be quoted with caution. Three errors are mentioned on an errata slip, and a few of the others must be indicated that students may know their general nature. On page ten, Abraham Booth is given a posthumous doctorate; the men mentioned on page 121 as members of Dr. Joseph Stennett's "fashionable congregation" at Wild Street were spread over a considerably longer period than Stennett's pastorate. He died in 1758, and one of the number, Joseph Hughes, was born eleven years later. On page 166, Isaiah Burt should be Birt; on pages 192, 198, etc., Charles Stovel is spelt Stovell; on page 235, it is stated that F. E. Blackaby was Secretary of the Gloucester and Hereford Association, and it is implied that his secretariat lasted seventeen years, whereas he was Secretary of the Oxfordshire Association, and for a somewhat shorter period; and on page 236, in W. G. Watkins' career, Swanick should be Swansea.