

## Reviews.

*A Plain Man's Life of Christ*, by A. D. Martin. (George Allen & Unwin, 8s. 6d. net.)

Mr. Martin was a Congregational Minister, who died recently, and the present book is a posthumous publication. It is introduced and commended by Professor Sydney Cave, and deservedly so. For the book is attractively and suggestively written, and many "a plain man" should find it both interesting and instructive.

The book does not, of course, profess to deal with everything recorded about Jesus in the Gospels. Mr. Martin takes as his ruling principle some words by F. S. Oliver. "The aim of the historian is to write a narrative which shall reduce a complicated confusion to its simplest elements, and he wisely discards all that is not essential for his purpose." The difficulty in this case is that the events of the Saviour's life are so well known that the process of omission must inevitably raise questions in the mind—Why is this or that left out, and why, as against the things left out, are some things kept in? Probably the size of the book has something to say in the selection of the material, and one must either write something on a very big scale, or make up his mind to leave out much he would like to discuss.

Mr. Martin does not profess to write for scholars, though it is quite evident that he knows his way about. One of the interesting points he makes in this connection is that he has got little help from Form-Criticism, the reason being that he distrusts the merely conjectural where it is unsupported by adequate evidence. It is rather surprising, therefore, that he commits himself to some rather loose statements. He thinks, for instance, that Jesus was older than thirty, and, while he does not entirely endorse it, he seems to favour the view expressed in the Fourth Gospel (ix. 57) that He passed for something under fifty. He suggests that Jesus was more than a carpenter by trade; in one place he says He was "a stonemason," and, at some time after His Baptism, Jesus, he declares, "built a home for His mother at Capernaum." He is greatly attracted by Burney's theory of poetic forms behind the discourses of Jesus, and he makes much of the poetry in the soul of Jesus. We know what this means, but Mr. Martin quotes passages from Havelock Ellis and Alice Meynell about the Rhythm of Life that make one ask whether the prose fact of the Gospel is not capable of being dissolved into spiritual beauty. The parable of the Sheep and the Goats he definitely calls a "poem," of "the same class of writings as the Myths of Plato." Symbolic it certainly is, but surely there is definite fact in it too. Of the Last Supper he says surprisingly, "there is no indication that Jesus intended His followers to repeat His symbolic acts." Apart from definite statements in the New

Testament, the practice of the early Church, one would have thought, gave unmistakable "indication."

Points like these need to be watched in any life of Jesus, but it would be wrong to overstress them in Mr. Martin's case. The book as a whole is both interesting and helpful, and even in retelling a familiar Gospel incident Mr. Martin reveals a power of his own. For instance, he makes the Synagogue a real place by describing a typical service (which, curiously enough, is not often done in a life of Jesus) and his account of the anointing of the feet of Jesus by the woman that was a sinner makes the scene live before us. The style is quiet and Wordsworthian in flavour, and Mr. Martin was obviously a man of beautiful spirit. His book makes the reader feel not only wiser but better, and that in a life of Jesus is perhaps the thing that matters most.

HENRY COOK.

*The Historic Mission of Jesus*, by C. J. Cadoux. (Lutterworth Press, 21s. net.)

In this substantial and important book Dr. Cadoux marshals the evidence of the Synoptic Gospels on the subject of the eschatological teaching of Jesus, i.e. His teaching on the Kingdom of God and its consummation, and His own relation to it. Each chapter is preceded by a series of propositions, which the evidence that follows seeks to establish, and the four main sections of the work are each concluded with a brief summary of the results to which they have led.

In his introduction the author reviews briefly some modern trends in the study of the Gospels. Dr. Cadoux is himself an unrepentant liberal, but he is sadly conscious that in our day the tide is running against liberalism. He recalls how Schweitzer was hailed by those who disliked liberalism, and who did not realise that the deluded visionary whom Schweitzer offered was farther from the Christ of tradition than is the Jesus of liberalism. He recalls how Form-Criticism, despite its effort to get behind the Gospels, does not lead to the Jesus of history, and in the hands of the more extreme of its devotees reaches completely negative positions. He recalls how Barthianism, with its emphasis on the divine transcendence, has discounted reason, and in the hands of some of its sympathisers has combined a transcendental Christology with a sceptical Form-Criticism, and thus cut the thread that links the Jesus of history to the Christ of faith.

Dr. Cadoux confesses that the liberalism to which he once subscribed was inadequate, since it sought to father its own ideas on Jesus. "I found the Master's word free from all admixture of human error," he says, "and fully consonant at every point with modern scientific and historical knowledge" (page 19). To-day, however, he finds it unreasonable to expect that Jesus should attain

to our level. "I am more prepared than I was to find that we cannot to-day just take over for ourselves as it stands the whole of the teaching He is recorded and may be believed to have given" (page 19). Nor will he exclude the spiritual from the sphere in which we may surpass Christ. "Of those Christians who see that the intellectual infallibility of Jesus cannot be maintained, many try to guard themselves by urging that the limitations of his knowledge affected only those matters which are of no moral or religious importance. The supposition is arbitrary" (page 343). Nevertheless, Dr. Cadoux recognises that "Jesus knows Himself"—and the choice of words implies that Dr. Cadoux allows the claim—"to be in closest filial intimacy with God as His Father, so that, while all righteous men are sons of God, He occupies a special place of His own as 'the Son' over against 'the Father' . . . He assumed an authority over men superior to that of any other authority they knew" (page 103).

Critically the author adopts an attitude towards the Gospel text which is "conservative and trustful" compared with that of the Form-Critics. He does not draw on the Fourth Gospel, which he places on a wholly different level of historical reliability. For the sources of the Synoptic Gospels he follows the hypothesis of Streeter. He appends to his introduction a list of these sources, and throughout the body of the work indicates by symbols to which of the sources the important passages he cites belong. On eschatology, he rejects alike the exaggerated views of the place of eschatology in the thought of Jesus, held by Schweitzer, and the complete rejection of the eschatological element as an accretion, as some liberals have held. He holds that "in the case of Jesus, eschatological beliefs were strictly secondary to the practical situations He had to face and the personal human realities with which He had to deal" (page 17).

That the work is based on the most thorough and exact scholarship is guaranteed by the name of the author. In his introduction he apologises for the incompleteness of his documentation, and for his failure to attain the impossible goal of omniscience in the vast field of the literature of the subject. The reader will only be aware of the amazing range of Dr. Cadoux' reading, and grateful for the fullness of the documentation. Few can have come nearer to a complete acquaintance with significant writing on the subject. Occasionally he lapses into pedantry, as when he writes Kapharnaum and Arimathai, but his reason for writing Khorazin is not obvious. Happily we are spared similar forms in other cases, and find the familiar Galilee and Tyre.

Occasionally the author falls somewhat below his usual standard of logic. Thus, on page 35, he says that "the reference to Joseph and Mary as Jesus' 'parents' (Luke ii. 27, 41; cf. 33), if not Mary's allusion to Joseph as 'thy father' (ii. 48), indicate that it (i.e. the story of Jesus in the Temple at the age of twelve) ante-dated Luke's acceptance of the doctrine of the Virgin Birth." If it is admitted

that Joseph had married Mary, then it would be natural to refer to them as the parents, whether Mary's child was his or not; and if Mary did not speak of Joseph to her twelve-year old son as 'thy father,' it is hard to suppose how she might have spoken of him. For there is no dispute that Jesus was brought up as the child of Joseph. These passages can hardly be used for this purpose, therefore.

Dr. Cadoux lays much stress on the earlier expectation of Jesus that He would be accepted by his fellow-countrymen, and on His effort to avoid a clash with Rome. He believed Himself to be the Messiah, but His conception of the Messiahship was not that of the common expectation, and so He made no public claim to it until the end of His life. In the eschatological passages Dr. Cadoux finds the term "Son of Man" to stand primarily for the saved and saving Remnant of Israel, with Jesus Himself as its head. As so frequently in the Old Testament, the thought can pass freely from the community to the individual that represents it, and in this use the term "Son of Man" is enriched by elements drawn from the Suffering Servant passages. Dr. Cadoux thinks that at the Temptation Jesus repudiated force as the means of establishing the Kingdom, but he thinks that He still cherished the hope of ruling a political kingdom on earth.

That the eschatological element had a real place in His thinking is sufficiently attested by His use of the concepts of the Messiah and the Son of Man, both of which had eschatological associations, though different ones. But the linking of these with one another, and both with the concept of the Suffering Servant, brought mutual modification, so that just as He thought of the office of the Messiah differently from others, so His thought of the significance of the other terms may have differed from the common expectation. We are told that His disciples did not always understand Him, but were sometimes blinded by their pre-conceptions. May this not be true? May not their admitted expectation of a political kingdom be as untrue to His purpose as the common reliance on the instrument of force was alien to His method? May not He who so profoundly modified the thought of the Messiah have also modified the concept of the Kingdom, so that He was not thinking of a political kingdom, in the sense of the apocalyptic expectations? May it not be that when the Fourth Gospel represents our Lord as saying "My kingdom is not of this world" it was not going beyond Him, but growing into His thought. This is not to affirm, of course, that His Kingdom is not political, in the sense that it has no interest in the corporate affairs of men. It is but to affirm that He aimed to transform, rather than to overthrow, existing kingdoms, and that He never cherished the deluded hope that He would replace Cæsar on a comparable throne.

Dr. Cadoux does not suppose that he will always carry his

readers with him. Many will go much of the way with him, and all may learn much from him. To the reviewer it would seem that he reduces the stature of Jesus to such a point that His consciousness of His relation with God involves a measure of delusion that threatens its validity. Yet he is grateful for the frank sincerity of this book, and its clear presentation of a systematic account of the teaching of Jesus, to which he will often turn with profit.

H. H. ROWLEY.

*The Relevance of the Bible*, by H. H. Rowley, M.A., D.D., B.Litt. (James Clarke, 6s.)

Dr. Rowley, Professor of Semitic Languages and Vice-Principal at the Bangor University College, is a scholar of wide reputation of whom Baptists may well be proud. He has written an interesting and valuable handbook to the Bible which is commendable for many reasons, not least because its aim is to stress "the importance of an attitude of mind to the Bible that is both scholarly and spiritual." In that aim Dr. Rowley succeeds, not merely by expounding but by demonstrating. On the one hand he demolishes the position of verbal inspirationists, who leave their intelligence in the cupboard when they take out the Scriptures, and that of the "students of prophecy," who regard the Bible as a kind of horoscope while, on the other hand, he shows the profitless inadequacy of mere barren scientific study. Dr. Rowley leads the reader along the sane and spiritually enriching path that lies well between credulity and scepticism.

Although the author states that his purpose is not to write a text-book of Biblical Theology, the "plain man" for whom the book is written will learn substantially from these pages about the Biblical teaching concerning God, Christ, Revelation, Sin and other kindred themes. The plain man would doubtless, however, have appreciated some explanation as to who Hegel, Marcion and others were and what they taught.

It is not unnatural, and it by no means lessens the value of the Book, that Dr. Rowley's main emphasis falls on the Old Testament, and the reader will be grateful to him for having brought out the Gospel which that part of the Bible contains. About "experience" the author has much to say, and he regards the experience of individuals as the key to understanding the Old Testament and, in preference to theological speculation, as the best approach to the Cross.

Well-written as this book is on the whole, there are occasionally some very awkwardly phrased sentences, while one need not be pedantic to be offended by Dr. Rowley's annoying habit of beginning so many sentences with "and," "for" and "nor," and

overworking the word "indeed." We find it hard to forgive him for the terrible pun on p. 54.

This book will be welcomed not only for its own excellence, but because Dr. Rowley emphasises that the Bible is not a scientific, historical or literary work, but in truth the vehicle of the Word of God to our souls.

GRAHAM W. HUGHES.

*Achievement, A Short History of the Baptist Missionary Society, 1792-1942*, by F. Townley Lord. (The Carey Press, 2s. 6d.)

This book is well named for it records great achievements. It has been specially written by Dr. Lord at the request of the Society, and he has given himself to the task with thoroughness. It is in popular style and enriched with illustrations, but it is more than a popular account of 150 years. Here are the facts: dates and names abound, and the various fields and aspects of the Society's work all receive consideration. Historically reliable; every minister and deacon and missionary worker should possess a copy—and read and re-read this thrilling story.

*An Enquiry into Meaning and Truth*, by Bertrand Russell. (George Allen and Unwin, 12s. 6d. net.)

A book like this—The William James Lectures for 1940, delivered at Harvard University—must inevitably be "caviare to the general", since it deals with the theory of knowledge, one of the most difficult of philosophical subjects. In parts, even the expert must feel that he gropes his way. But the book provides a useful mental discipline, even when one dissents from the "behaviourist" view on which it largely rests. Written with Bertrand Russell's brilliance, it can be commended to those who want to stretch the muscles of their mind.