

## Reviews.

*The Relevance of the Prophets*, by R. B. Y. Scott. (Macmillans, New York, 1944.) Pp. xii, 238. \$2.50.

Professor R. B. Y. Scott is a well-known Canadian scholar, who has been serving as a Chaplain in the Canadian Air Force during the war. In this book, which is based on some lectures delivered at a Summer School before the war, he gives us what is at once an unusual study of the prophets, and easily the best recent study of the canonical Old Testament prophets.

Instead of dealing seriatim with the prophets in the order of their appearance, and presenting a history of Old Testament prophecy, he treats of them all together in a series of studies of their work from various angles. In the first chapter he asks what prophecy is, and shows that while it includes the element of prediction it is much more than prediction. He does not linger over its forms and outer manifestations, but penetrates to its fundamental essence as an authentic word of God, relevant to the crisis of the prophet's own age, and therefore manifesting "the timeless quality and compelling power of authentic spiritual utterance." The second chapter, on "The World of the Prophets," is a good study of the social and religious conditions of the age of the prophets. Then follows a study of the rise of the prophets, in the course of which Professor Scott refers briefly to the cultic prophets, to whom Professor A. R. Johnson has recently devoted much close study. Like Professor Johnson, but unlike some other recent writers, Professor Scott does not reduce all Old Testament prophecy to cultic prophecy. He observes: "With the great prophets such a connection with the cultus was exceptional; but that bodies of 'official prophets,' continued down to the seventh century to be associated with the temple priesthood is clear."

In the chapter on "The Prophetic Succession" he traces the higher prophecy of Israel from Moses through its Golden Age to its Silver Age in the post-exilic period. That Israelite prophecy is closely related to forms of prophecy that were found amongst other peoples of the world in which Israel lived is frequently said, and is fully recognised by Professor Scott. But that there was a different quality infusing the forms in Israel, and that that quality began to appear in Israel with the truly prophetic personality of Moses is less often said. The reviewer would commend the balanced judgment of Professor Scott in so well bringing this out.

The next chapter deals with "The Prophetic Word," and it treats of the psychology of prophecy, and of the source and authentication of the prophet's message. The next two chapters, on "The Theology of the Prophets" and "The Prophets and History," appeal to the reviewer as the best in the book. In the latter chapter especially much that is penetrating is excellently said, as when the author observes: "More important than any question of terminology is the fact that the Old Testament is characterised by the historical quality of its thought, as distinguished from a mythological or mystical approach to reality. It is built round a history, and an interpretation of that history which becomes an interpretation of all history." Here Professor Scott sharply distinguishes the religion of the prophets from the Canaanite religion of which we have so much knowledge to-day. Whereas some writers represent the higher religion of Israel as a sort of natural evolution out of the old fertility religion, Professor Scott, with truer insight, sets the two in sharp contrast. He says: "It will suffice to mention certain elements which mark its (i.e. the fertility religion's) fundamental difference from the historical religion which appeared in Israel. In the first place, its gods and goddesses were personified natural forces, who had come into being, according to the different mythologies, from the ground-stuff of nature. . . . There could thus be no question of a personal and moral relationship between the nature gods and their worshippers, or of any meaning in events beyond their indication that the gods were for the moment pleased, indifferent or angry." In contrast with this history was the sphere of Yahweh's activity, and in the interpretation of its significant moments lay a profounder message than any that nature religion could possibly provide.

In the following chapter, dealing with "The Prophets and the Social Order," Professor Scott again shows a fine balance. Without minimising the social aspect of the prophetic message, he does not reduce the prophets to mere social reformers, but insists that even in their social ministry they were fundamentally religious figures. "The social evils which the prophets denounced," he says, "were not political and economic merely; they were at the same time religious evils." The remaining chapters deal with "Prophetic Religion" and "The Relevance of the Prophets," the last chapter giving its title to the book, and showing how the principles which infused the message of the prophets are applicable in the circumstances of our modern world, which urgently needs their application.

Throughout the book memorable sentences abound. The whole rests on a solid acquaintance with modern work in this field, and on an intimate acquaintance with the prophetic books them-

selves. A rich array of texts from the various books is brought together, and the whole should inspire much fresh study of the prophets. It may be unreservedly commended to minister and layman alike. It is non-technical in its presentation, and well-written, while its scholarship is thoroughly reliable.

H. H. ROWLEY.

*Preaching in the First Half Century of New England History*, by Babette May Levy, pp. 215. The American Society of Church History, Hartford, Connecticut.

It is somewhat surprising that such a study has not appeared before, and we may be thankful that it is so excellent and impartial. A full bibliography tells of thirty-four men whose sermons were printed in their lifetime, yonder and here; many extracts enable us to sample them, and they are tested in many ways.

English readers may need a few words of introduction. New England was rather late in emerging on any map, and later still in receiving colonists. Dutchmen had settled a New Amsterdam on the Hudson; Huguenots had founded a New Palatinate further west; there was a Nova Scotia to the north, when the Pilgrim Fathers rounded Cape Cod and cast anchor in 1621 where Captain John Smith, of Danbury, had suggested a new Plymouth might arise. Their tenacity proved that the district would support life, and a wealthy company was formed to choose fitting pioneers and equip them properly. The moving spirits were the Rich family of Essex, and it is not surprising that this English county soon had its namesake yonder. The Mayor of our Maldon was invited a few years ago to the tercentenary of the daughter town; a tablet in Springfield church has been duplicated in a more famous arsenal city, and a village green has a monument to commemorate a victory at the western Chelmsford.

A systematic emigration began in 1629, and Miss Levy has traced its spiritual history till 1679, when three of her preachers passed away. Politically we think of Boston; but in those days men thought of Salem, viewing a heavenly city through the perspective glass of a new Cambridge. John Harvard of Emmanuel in England has enshrined his name at a college intended to educate not New Englanders alone, but any who should find Old England too bigoted for them; we may regret that none of his sermons have found a printer.

How did any sermon get published? Look at the earliest, by the Pilgrim Father Robert Cushman, not technically a Minister, only an Elder. He wrote it in 1621 and it was printed next year in London with a preface "Shewing the state of the

Country, and Condition of the Savages." This was by no means typical. Preachers for the new Company, as distinct from the old Colony, were picked men, educated at fifteen colleges in Cambridge and seventeen at Oxford; picked and silenced by Laud, welcomed and given influential posts by the managers of the Company and the authorities of the churches. Scarcely ever did friction arise between these magnates; it is perhaps a defect in this study that this is not treated more fully: Roger Williams was banished from Salem, while the missionary sermons which he prepared for the press in Rhode Island were never printed. Half a dozen sermons were issued in London by 1656; Boston began printing twenty years later; but the great centre was always Cambridge, beginning with Mather's exposition of Justification by Faith in 1652. Type and a press had been imported and used by Dunster of the college, but Samuel Green stood on his own feet as publisher.

What was the staple of the preaching? It was usually doctrinal, Calvinistic, on the two Covenants. Rarely was reference made to the civil war in England, though the success of Gustavus Adolphus had prompted one sermon. Arminian teaching was a frequent bugbear, whether of the Laudian type or the papal. Such care was taken to secure uniformity that dissenting sects such as Baptists and Quakers were barely noticed till 1665; whipping them was easier than confuting. No-one could be certain of the fate of any infant, but one minister hoped that a non-elect babe would have "the easiest room in Hell."

Of course, every sermon was based on a text, and apparently the 1611 version had now displaced the Genevan. Many preachers preferred continuous exposition, as of the gospel and epistles of John; another in about fourteen years went through every single book of the Bible; as a contrast, a third founded twenty-seven sermons on Romans v. 1. To us it seems strange that so little attention was drawn to the life or the teaching of the Lord.

Again and again it is emphasised and illustrated that the language and the style were carefully adjusted to the comprehension of the ordinary hard-working man or woman. A preacher did not obtrude his knowledge of five or six languages, but deliberately cultivated simplicity. Though we have no trace of a separate service for children or even a special address, there are occasional family touches such as: "As it is with a little child that is not able to goe of it selfe, the father takes the child in his hand, and then it is able to goe. The childe holds the father, not because it hath any power of it selfe, but because the father holds him, so we hold the Lord Jesus Christ, because we are holden of him."

Now what was the result of such preaching? No data are

drawn from the official records of synods, though there are instances of men fined for severe criticism. More to the point are the acknowledgments of ministers themselves, who do not shelter under excuses like a second generation being inevitably worse than a select body of immigrants. Consider the average sabbath. Twice in that day the whole population was expected to attend worship for an hour or two. This was varied by selections from the Bay psalm-book, to which no allusion is made, and by Bible-reading, and by prayers for some half-hour; but the staple was a sermon. Picture the adults. One is diligently making shorthand notes, to ponder over at leisure; another "sits and thinks," possibly about his spiritual state or whether she is bringing up the children wisely; another does not trouble to think, unless on purely mundane affairs; while occasionally a vacant mind is betrayed by outright snores. That may send the humble preacher home for self-examination, that at the mid-week service he may be better prepared to secure attention and focus it on the centre of all life: "the Lord Jesus Christ was the Loadstone which gave a touch to all the sermons of our Elect, a Glorious, Precious, Lovely Christ, was the Point of Heaven which they still verged unto."

W. T. WHITLEY.

*War, Peace and Nonresistance*, by Guy F. Hershberger. (The Herald Press, Scottsdale, Pennsylvania, 1944. \$2.50).

This substantial volume of more than four hundred pages comes from the pen of the Professor of History and Sociology at Goshen College, Indiana, one of the most important educational centres of the American Mennonites. The book was originally undertaken at the request of the Mennonite Peace Problems Committee, who desired a study manual; it has grown into an important doctrinal and historical treatise. After chapters on War in Human History, Peace and War in the Old Testament, Nonresistance in the New Testament, and Peace, War and the State in the History of the Church, the author devotes more than a hundred pages to an outline of Mennonite history, particularly that in America and from the time of the first World War, and including migrations in and from Europe. It is these sections which will be most valuable for those in this country, as the material is all too little known. Dr. Hershberger then returns to a study of Nonresistance in relation to the modern state and to modern industrial conflicts, and considers also the differences between what he calls "Biblical Nonresistance" and "Modern Pacifism" as upheld by Quakers, Liberal Protestants, Tolstoi, Gandhi and the political objectors to war. In America the

Mennonites have shared with the Society of Friends and the Church of the Brethren the title of "Historic Peace Churches." They trace their history back directly to the Swiss Anabaptists of 1525. The group represented by Dr. Hershberger maintain their opposition not only to the use of force of a military kind, but also to personal participation in the civil magistracy. But the State they believe necessary and ordained by God for the maintenance of order in the unregenerate society of this world. Faced with the demands of the American authorities during the recent war, they established and ran at their own expense Civilian Public Service Camps, and also did much for the relief of war sufferers. In industrial relationships, lest they should be involved in strikes or violence, they seem for some time to have secured a position which has no exact parallel in this country. "Since 1935 the Mennonite Church has signed numerous agreements with labor organisations. Most of these agreements represent an improvement over that with the United Mine Workers, in providing that the Mennonite employee contributes a sum of money which is not intended for the union's general treasury, but for some benevolent or charitable cause. In some cases the contribution is specified for the sick benefit fund of the union. In others the agreement states that the money is to be used for the charity work of the union. In a few cases benevolent causes, outside the union itself, have been specified as beneficiaries of the contributions" (p. 287). The witness of any group of this kind is important and challenging. Baptists, though as a community they have never shared their doctrine of nonresistance, are kinsfolk of the Mennonites. They should have a special interest in the study of the material here presented.

ERNEST A. PAYNE.

*The Shattered Cross: The Many Churches and the One Church*, by William Robinson. (Berean Press, 2s. 6d.)

In this not very happily named little book are reproduced a number of short articles published in the first place in *The Christian Advocate*, the weekly journal of the Churches of Christ. Their original purpose was to give to readers an objective summary of the main characteristics of the churches of what is described as the "orthodox type" of Christianity. They include also short accounts of other religious groups embodying to a greater or less degree Christian features.

It is perhaps inevitable that, with such an origin, the impression made by these talks as published is apt to be rather one of scrappiness. Nevertheless, within the narrow limits he has set himself, Dr. Robinson has made a real, and on the whole not

unsuccessful attempt, to give a fair picture of the different Christian traditions with which he is dealing. The book will not appeal to members of what he calls "churches with peculiar doctrines," still less to those practising "substitutes for Christianity" (e.g., Mormonism, Christian Science)—against whom, as the Preface says, "the faithful need to be warned."

The really valuable paper in the series is that at the end of the book, in which Dr. Robinson expounds in more detail the history and aims of the Disciples (or Churches of Christ). This is an attractive presentation of a body of Christian thought and practice not as yet very well-known in this country, and Dr. Robinson has done well both to give some information about the subject, and also to indicate material for further reading.

The style of the production—which borders at times on the limits of the colloquial—might, with advantage, have been clarified in places for the benefit of the general reader: for example, "formerly in America all Baptist churches were close communion and close membership" (p. 41); and, "they fellowship only their own members" (p. 51). The diagrams on pages 8-11 are useful, but the first of them curiously suggests that the Methodists preceded the Independents, and that Quakers were the spiritual ancestors of the Irvingites.

R. L. CHILD.

*Great Christian Books*, by Hugh Martin. (S.C.M., 6s. pp. 128.)

Readers of *The Baptist Quarterly* already owe a great debt of gratitude to Dr. Hugh Martin, not only for the many books which he has written and edited, but also for his outstanding work at the S.C.M. Press. In this book he has increased our debt in an unusually intimate way. He has gone round his own library and selected seven great Christian Classics which have profoundly influenced his own life and has then set down in writing the essence of their message to their own age and to men of all time.

The result is a most enjoyable book, full of delightful quotations, and the enjoyment is increased by the facsimiles given of the title pages of Rutherford's *Letters*, Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Carey's *An Enquiry*, and the *Report of the Trial of Guido Franceschini*.

In addition to these there are studies of Augustine's *Confessions*, Brother Lawrence's *Practice of the Presence of God*, and William Law's *A Serious Call*. The choice is interesting in its variety. The seven writers span the Christian centuries from the fourth down to yesterday. They are African, Scottish, French and English; Catholic Bishop, Covenanter, monk, Puritan parson, Non-Juror, Baptist missionary, poet of Independent

stock. The thread linking them all together is that golden string which, wound into a ball, "will lead us in at Heaven's gate, built in Jerusalem's wall"—intense personal religion. It is present in Carey's *Enquiry* no less than in Rutherford's *Letters*. Nor is the inclusion of Browning's *The Ring and the Book* an exception. Browning's robust Christian faith (so clearly brought out by Dr. Martin) is the necessary corrective to the unduly ascetic approach of William Law.

But while the books studied deal in the main exclusively with personal religion, their writers were by no means "escapists." St. Augustine, "when a whole civilisation was collapsing . . . did much to guide the task of reconstruction. Samuel Rutherford, John Bunyan and William Law all endured persecution for their faith . . . William Carey was a staunch opponent of the slave trade and laboured through a long life for the social welfare of the Indian peoples." Robert Browning wrestled for his faith in days of doubt. This commends their message to the twentieth century with its stress on "social justice and economic reconstruction." But while the life of Brother Lawrence in contrast was quiet and uneventful, is there not a special relevance for his message in our days, seeing that he found the presence of God in a multiplicity of hum-drum duties similar to those tasks which fill the waking hours of so many in this industrial age?

In her biography of Temple Gairdner, Constance Padwick says, "For all her faults and struggles, the *Ecclesia Anglicana* is still the mother of saints." It is the deep desire of the present reviewer that the Baptist Church may make the same proud claim. The Baptist Church has had her saints; the works of two of them are studied in this book. And this book, if it is prayerfully read, and if it sends Baptists back to the great Christian classics which it commends, will play its part in the nourishment of the saints of the twentieth century and join that "apostolic succession of Christian books" of which it speaks.

EDGAR W. WRIGHT.

*First Steps in Prayer*, by Denis Lant. (Carey Press, 5s. cloth, 3s. 6d. paper.)

Throughout my ministry, which has covered more than forty years, I have been a keen student of the literature provided by the various denominations for the guidance of their people in the things of God and the culture of a devout and holy life. High on my list stand the Presbyterians, with their most valuable handbooks and manuals on Christian doctrine and practice. Then come the Roman Catholics, with their little books of devotion, mostly for children in their adolescent experiences, which seek



to establish the child in the ways of the Church. The Church of England, especially the High Church section of it, has a real regard for the religious welfare of the young. Their little books on Confirmation and Holy Communion may not appeal to you, but they serve their purpose with great efficiency. The Methodist Church, under the direction of Dr. Church, is doing excellent things. The Independent, Baptist and Congregational lag a long way behind, in spite of the progress we have made within the last twenty years; we seem to be afraid of "directions" and "prayers," and simple guidance in the things that make for eternal life. Now and again an outstanding contribution is made and all the Churches are enriched by it, but I cannot recall a Baptist contribution of much worth. This reproach comes to an end with the publication by the Carey Press of *First Steps in Prayer*, by Denis Lant. This is a small book of a hundred pages on a subject of the greatest importance to all who follow Christ's way of life. I cordially welcome it and warmly commend it. The writer has the young disciple before his mind as he writes, but the book is equally useful to those of middle life and old age. He teaches us how to pray, what to pray for, and what to expect from God in our prayers.

The book flows on like a mountain stream winding its way through the valley to join the greater waters of the river and the sea. It makes sweet music on its journey, and enriches those who have an ear to hear and a heart to understand. On the banks of the stream we meet St. Francis de Sales and Schleiermacher, a man from the R.A.F., and an English Bishop, and many another saint of God, all holding out their experiences of God in prayer to us.

This little book should be put into the hands of all who come forward to confess Christ in the waters of baptism. Its use will enrich the life of the Baptist Church for days to come. I know the writer, and I know that this piece of writing is the lifting of the corner of the veil that encloses his own prayer life.

D. TAIT PATTERSON.

*South-East from Serampore*: More chapters in the story of the Baptist Missionary Society, by Ernest A. Payne. (Carey Press, 5s.)

One comes to the end of this little book with mingled feelings of pathos and regret, but predominantly of gratitude. Here we have the hitherto little known story of the pioneer efforts of Baptist missionaries to further Carey's grand strategic plan of bringing South-East Asia to Christ. It is a plain tale of ordinary men, kindled by the Holy Spirit, attempting and achieving extra-

ordinary feats of heroism and devotion, and if its ending seems to be inconclusive and disappointing, none with imagination will read these pages unmoved.

It is good to be reminded by historical studies such as these of the true nature, especially of the costliness, of all missionary endeavour. To a full appreciation of these factors, Mr. Payne's skilful handling of his material predisposes the reader throughout. That the main figures in the story may speak for themselves, great patience and labour have been expended in the study and choice of original correspondence, excerpts from which provided the background and principal illustrative matter of the story. (What missionary or prospective missionary will not be grateful especially for the Society's letter of Commission to Richard Burton and Charles Evans (p. 42), and the profoundly moving and important letter of Carey to his son Jabez on setting out for Amboyna (App. A.)?) The style is quiet, scholarly and unobtrusive, yet marked by a sensitiveness and warmth which characterises all the author's missionary writings. He knows himself to be dealing with infinitely more than merely a well-intentioned but ill-fated venture that petered out. For if the story were simply one of unrelieved failure we might well ask, "Whereunto was this waste?" To that question this book is itself in large part the answer. For through its pages, Robinson, Brückner, Trowt and the others have an imperative word to say to the Church of this generation, and none who heed it can think of their lives in terms of failure or waste. Some may find the measure of their effectiveness in the establishing of Dutch and later American Missions to the Netherlands East Indies, and when considering the amazing growth of the Batak Church in recent times, Baptists may well remember with pride these men who pointed the way for others. But for their greatest and most important contribution to the Missionary cause we have to look more closely into the lives of these men. At least one reader has found it in the quality of Christian character revealed in these pages. What men they were! William Robinson, learning slowly to discipline an unruly temper for Christ's sake, facing loneliness, disappointment, frustration, even despair, yet plodding on and keeping the passion fresh; Gottlob Brückner of the gentle, persevering, utterly consecrated spirit that would not be quenched even when the Mission itself forsook him; Thomas Trowt, health already undermined and carrying an impossible burden of work and responsibility, yet considering himself "in one of the most important stations of the Mission, at the open door of an Empire," and therefore unwilling to relinquish it on any account.

Lives such as these bring it home to us that if the demands of a changing world situation call for new and better missionary

methods, clearer insight, wiser planning and statesmanship, the fundamental qualities essential to the successful missionary career remain unchanged. Here, then, is the great value of this book. In the faithful portrayal of little known but truly great men, in their weakness and strength, their devotion and zeal, Mr. Payne once more brings all missionary students into his debt. The more people read this book, the more certainly will devotion be kindled and new lives dedicated to the service of the Kingdom. It is too soon yet to speak of the end of this story.

W. J. BRADNOCK.

*A Maker of Modern China*, by Albert J. Garnier. (Carey Press, 5s.)

*Timothy Richard*, by E. W. Price Evans. (Carey Press, 6s.)

These two books are complementary. The first shows us the China in which Timothy Richard lived for forty-five years, and gives us a clear and concise summary of the great work he did there; the second begins in Wales and shows us the influences that made Timothy Richard, and then proceeds to China to bring out the superb greatness of the man in all his manifold activities as missionary, philanthropist and statesman. The first is historical; the second is personal.

From one who sits in Timothy Richard's chair in Shanghai carrying on his work of supplying educated China with Christian literature, we should expect a knowledgeable account of Timothy Richard's great contribution towards the making of New China. We are not disappointed. Mr. Garnier is an accurate observer of Chinese events. In his book he gives us a short history of the development of China from 1869 to the present day. He describes the old Celestial Empire to which Richard came, the revolutionary changes which he lived through, the share he had in producing these changes, and the results of the ferment of Timothy Richard's divine Gospel in present-day China. The last section is very thought-provoking. He shows us New China facing an epochal period in her long history—China at the parting of three ways: (1) To the Right—the old way of a revived Confucianism and Buddhism; (2) To the Left—modern way of Communism or a Militant Nationalism; (3) To the Centre—the way of Jesus Christ and His Gospel of the Kingdom as preached by Timothy Richard. The whole section should be studied by all who are concerned with the future of China. The challenge is inescapable. We must carry on and extend the work which Timothy Richard began.

The second book is by a Welsh minister who combines

scholarship with evangelical zeal. There is a glow about this book and we catch some of the fire that burned in Timothy Richard's heart. Mr. Evans obviously enjoys writing about his hero, and he has given us a most readable and interesting account of Timothy Richard's life and work, with a clear and true picture of his versatile personality—imaginative yet practical, enthusiastic yet disciplined, deeply religious yet broadminded, greatly gifted yet single-minded in his devotion to his Lord and Saviour. Mr. Evans succeeds in bringing out the greatness of the man in his vision of New China led by Christian statesmen trained in Christian colleges supported by a United Christian Church stimulated by Christian literature; his ability to translate vision into action by his work of evangelising the rulers, founding universities, forming united Chinese Churches and training leaders, and extending the work of the Christian Literature Society; his friendliness and courtesy, his perseverance and patience; above all, his shining devotion to Jesus Christ and his gladness in being His ambassador to the Chinese. Though Mr. Evans has never been in China, his knowledge of that land is accurate, informative and inspiring. This book will hold you as it did me from start to finish. It will broaden and deepen your missionary zeal. It will bring to you the urgent need of an unfinished work and an insistent Call that will make you respond. This book will certainly make missionaries for home and overseas service.

GEORGE A. YOUNG.

*Adventurers in Africa*, by H. L. Hemmens. (Carey Press, London, 1945, 1s. 6d.)

This book retells chapters in the story of Christian missionary work in Africa. The author has selected seven British men and women who "dedicated their lives and powers to Christ for the sake of Africa's people."

A very representative selection has been made. The appended sketch map shows that the Mission Fields referred to are well distributed over the Continent. There is a remarkable variety, too, in biographical detail. The missionaries come from differing Christian denominations. Some were reared in wealthy families and had the advantages of a liberal education, while others grew up in poverty with little early schooling. Some heard the call to missionary service in early life, but two or three found their vocation only when they had already set out on promising careers in the home country. There is great variety in the problems which these workers had to face; and this is matched by the variety of the solutions they advocated as they pressed education,

medicine, agriculture, industrial work and so on into the job of proclaiming the Good News.

If there is one thing which they had in common (other than their Faith) it is the length of their service. This book tells of successful missionary endeavour, but it reminds us that continuity of service and unity of purpose are essential for the building up of the African Church.

The final chapter contains a summary of some of the achievements of missionary enterprise in Africa.

These stories of Adventurers in Africa will be welcomed by all who are interested in African Missions and the selection and presentation of the material will certainly add cogency to the claim with which the author closes his book:

“There can be no finer life and no more rewarding task for Christian young men and women . . . than that of offering themselves to the service of Christ for the making of a new Africa.”

J. F. CARRINGTON.

*Sermons on the Christian Way*, by H. L. Hemmens. (Carey Press, 5s.)

We all know H. L. Hemmens, but what is he, magazine editor, organiser of Summer Schools, writer of children's stories, missionary advocate or preacher? He does all these things and does them well. His friends (and what a host he has!) should welcome the little volume of *Sermons on the Christian Way* recently published. It is Mr. Hemmens in one of his less familiar roles but, as usual, on top of his job. They are typical of the man. Those who know him can see and hear him delivering them. They do not claim to be or aim at being profound theological discourses. This preacher knows, what some of us preachers forget, that the average hearer has not enjoyed or suffered from much theological training, that he wants and needs to have religion expressed and expounded in plain and simple terms. Mr. Hemmens meets that need; no one who reads these sermons will wonder what he is driving at, he will understand.

I do not know if Mr. Hemmens ever listened to or read Campbell Morgan much, but he has a measure of the latter's gift of allowing the Bible to illustrate itself. In days when there is so much profound ignorance of the Bible that is valuable. Even preachers of long standing and ability may learn something from the way he handles his material. The volume is worth reading.

E. MURRAY PAGE.

*God's Word for His World*, by Barnard R. H. Spaul, M.A.  
(Independent Press Ltd., 4s. 6d.)

This book is the product of a belief that this is God's world; and that the Bible has something "absolutely vital to say" about it. When we seek to build "a world of prosperous, happy and purposeful citizens out of the wreckage of to-day, the Bible is fundamental in its diagnosis and remedy." The author begins with a consideration of man: a current starting point. His life is meaningless and frustrated. Current diagnosis grasps symptoms—Mr. Spaul's enumeration is of big and vital issues—rather than the real problem, which is that man who "had to grow up either under God's direction or independently of God" chose the latter. Hence, history has gone astray.

God never deviated from His purpose. The situation created by man's disobedience set God a double task: "First how to wrest the course of human history back into its intended direction; and, second, how to win the individual for complete obedience to God's purpose." This is the work in which God has been engaged through prophets and Christ and the Church. More adequate treatment might have been given to "what has the Cross to do with it?", if "it was the coming of Jesus that released a new spiritual force in the history of humanity," and if this is "God's great new move." An exhaustive treatment of the Atonement is out of the question, but "the historic facts . . . God-given," must be interpreted. The author shows that the failings of the Church never completely excluded God, and contends that the consecrated Church is the only instrument by which "the supreme task can be achieved."

The book is the work of the Rev. B. R. H. Spaul, a well-known Congregationalist minister of London. The questions for discussion at the end of each chapter, and the suggestions for Bible reading, will make it a useful book for discussions with young people.

W. J. GRANT.