

## Reviews.

*Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind*, by P. T. Forsyth, M.A., D.D. (Independent Press, 10s. 6d.)

This is not a bedside book. The author informs us at the outset that it has cost him much to find his way so far, but he believes that he has found the true and magnetic North. Not everyone will accept Forsyth's orientation, but no one will read this book without feeling its powerful demand for searching thought and deeper preaching.

The preacher's place in Protestant worship is clearly defined; he stands in the true line of succession to the Apostles, who were neither priests nor bishops, but preachers. The apostolic succession is the evangelical, and the continuance of a living Protestantism lies with the recognition of the central place of the Sacrament of the living Word. This Word, which is the preacher's charter and authority, is in the Bible. Many who may not be able to agree with all that is written in the later and more doctrinal chapters will be grateful for the earlier pages on the Bible.

In an age in which evangelism is often separated from the Church, it is good to heed Forsyth's reminder that the preacher's first duty is to the Church, and that it is through the Church that he will make his surest impact on the world. There follows a stimulating analysis of the function of the preacher in the Church; he is not there to declare anything new—though it is all to the good if he speaks with freshness—but to offer to the Church the Gospel that is already in it. He makes discoveries *in* the Gospel but not *of* the Gospel. When he speaks it is the great, common, universal faith addressing the faith of the local community. Forsyth has a pertinent word to say about the demand for short sermons: "A Christianity of short sermons is a Christianity of short fibre. Brevity may be the soul of wit, but the preacher is not a wit."

So much for positive preaching. But what of the modern mind? And how far does the mind of 1907, to which Forsyth speaks, correspond to that of 1949? If our age has found its way through some of the problems of that previous generation, this is due in no small measure to the strong counsel given by Forsyth in this and other books. The Liberalism which he combats so trenchantly in these pages has long since passed to the defensive, but it is good to be reminded of the great truths of Forsyth's positive theology which has prepared the way for

the illustrious Reformed thinkers of today. If theology is to be modernized, he says, it must be modernized by its own Gospel and not by the latest notions of science or sentiment. And if our creed is to be reduced, our faith must be increased as we concentrate on the central doctrines of Christ's Eternal Sonship, Mediatorship and Resurrection.

Forsyth's age, he tells us, was set as never before on moral righteousness. Alas! ours is not. But that should be all the more reason for heeding what he has to say about the moral poignancy of the Cross and the need for preaching the holiness of God as the very core of the Atonement. Here we catch some of the great notes which are sounded in his other works, and especially in "The Work of Christ," and many will feel that here indeed he has found the true and magnetic North. But be that as it may, none will withhold their reverence for his greatness as a man as he concludes: "No one can feel more than I do that if all this be not absolute truth it is sheer nonsense."

Every preacher should read this book, and none will do so without his heart being searched, his mind stimulated, and his preaching enriched.

IRWIN J. BARNES.

*Charles Freer Andrews*, by Benarsidas Chaturvedi and Marjorie Sykes. (Allen and Unwin, 10s. 6d.)

No brief review can do justice to this timely and significant biography. Written with fine feeling and restraint it breathes throughout the noble spirit of "Dinabandhu." However we may think of him, as missionary, prophet, reformer, statesman, mystic or saint, any true estimate of the "measure of the fullness of the stature" of the man depends on our understanding something of that rare and elusive spiritual quality which informed and integrated his whole being. Those familiar with the largely autobiographical classics of the inner life, his "What I owe to Christ" and "Christ in the Silence," already know that the well-spring of this life so amazingly rich in influence and achievement, was an intense and uncompromising devotion to Jesus Christ. The power of this book to move and inspire derives largely from the authors' unflinching regard for this truth.

The main background of C. F. Andrews' life was the complex tangle of Indo-British relationships during the fateful forty years of struggle for national honour, social reform and political independence. All the world knows how the first and most momentous phrase of that struggle ended in the miracle of August, 1947. It may be only too easy to forget that the ending

might have been a colossal disaster. One cannot close this book without feeling that more than any other single factor one man's willingness to be the "fool of God" made the miracle possible. In the fullness of the times C. F. Andrews was God's special gift to both India and Britain, for if suspicion, bitterness and hatred yielded ultimately to tolerance, mutual respect and a profound desire for a peaceful and honourable solution it was largely by the alchemy of that Christlike love and invincible faith of which he was the embodiment. In a new era bright with promise and goodwill it is for missionaries and statesmen to see that his legacy is not squandered.

It should not be thought that this is a book about India. Once in a generation a life such as this comes as a challenge, an inspiration and a rebuke to all Christians everywhere. Its lessons are of universal application. It reveals what may be achieved in any part of the human scene where one man really abandoned to the Divine Will becomes the tool of His Purpose. It is as relevant to the problems of colour in America and "apartheid" in S. Africa as it is to industrial strife on the home-front or communist infiltration in the western world. It demands that always and everywhere we remember that the root of all our human disorder is estrangement from God and that the only final answer to that is the Word made Flesh.

That is what this book is really about. To read it is both a humbling and exalting experience.

W. J. BRADNOCK.

*Luke's Portrait of Jesus*, by Hugh Martin. (S.C.M., 6s.)

In his foreword Dr. Martin says that St. Luke's Gospel has always meant more to him than any other single book, in or out of the New Testament, and it is evident in this, his latest publication, that he has been working under a sense of personal indebtedness. It is needless to summarise the contents since the title does that with complete adequacy. Dr. Martin has written for "those who have not the time or the training for following the work of the scholars" and there is almost unlimited scope in the Biblical field for those who can perform that service as helpfully as the author has done here. This is a really useful guide to the third Gospel. Amongst the many who will read it with profit and pleasure, those who arrange Lay Preachers' courses and examinations will, I imagine, take a particularly significant interest in it.

G. W. RUSLING.