

Reviews

Reformers in India, 1793-1833, by Kenneth Ingham (Cambridge University Press, 1956, 150 pp., 18s.).

The writer of this important monograph is now Senior Lecturer in History at Makerere College in E. Africa. He has provided for the first time a detailed account of the work of Christian missionaries on behalf of social reform in India from the time Carey landed there to 1833, when the Act renewing the East India's Company's Charter made licences for missionaries unnecessary. Successive chapters deal with their attitude to caste, idolatrous festivals and the practice of sati, education, the status of women, languages, literature, journalism and translation, and medicine and agriculture. The book is naturally of special interest to Baptists for "the versatile and wholly indefatigable" (p. 118) William Carey, appears on almost every page. The Serampore missionaries inevitably claim considerable attention for they were pioneers in all these fields. The importance of William Ward's *Account of the Writings, Religion and Manners of the Hindoos* is duly recognised, as is the standard of scholarship and the incisiveness of the *Friend of India*. It is also good to be reminded of the considerable part played by James Peggs, the General Baptist missionary to Orissa. The only major Baptist name that one misses is that of Hannah Marshman, who should surely have appeared in the chapters on education and women. In an appendix, Dr. Ingham provides a valuable list of all the Protestant missionaries at work in India during the period, together with a map showing the stations of the different societies. There are also some useful bibliographical notes dealing with unpublished as well as published material. Unfortunately Dr. Ingham was in touch with the B.M.S. during the evacuation of its headquarters to Kettering. He was apparently not informed that many of the early letter-books and other material are in safe keeping at Regent's Park College, Oxford. This makes the section on B.M.S. records inadequate and misleading. It is also strange to find that no use was made of C. B. Lewis's life of John Thomas or of the biographies of Carey by George Smith and S. Pearce Carey. These, however, are only minor omissions since Dr. Ingham had access to the *Periodical Accounts* and *Reports* of the Society and to the files of many of the Serampore publications. This is a very welcome study. One is again filled with amazement at what the pioneers undertook and accomplished. One cannot but wonder why subsequent generations of Baptists, and their colleagues of other denominations, in India and in other places, have so few comparable achievements.

ERNEST A. PAYNE

Christology and Myth in the New Testament, by Geraint Vaughan Jones. (George Allen & Unwin, 21s.).

The sub-title of this book (An Inquiry into the character, extent and interpretation of the Mythological Element in New Testament Christology) indicates at once how closely related it is to the "de-mythologising" controversy. It is one of the most extensive and thorough investigations of the problems involved by a single author, as distinguished from the various symposia which have appeared. Though Mr. Jones restricts his work to the field of Christology, he also has a good deal to say about cosmology, the problem of evil and eschatology. The author naturally takes the work of Rudolf Bultmann as his starting-point, and expresses gratitude to his former teacher for his incisive challenge to Christian preachers and theologians. But while he agrees with Bultmann, in broad terms, that much of the language of the New Testament is "mythological," and that this presents a challenge which must not be evaded, he also differs from him on a number of important issues: (1) Mr. Jones criticises Bultmann's too sweeping and indiscriminating use of the term "mythology." (2) Bultmann's extreme historical scepticism with regard to the Synoptic Gospels and the tradition enshrined in them is rejected, and a far more decisive place is given to the witness of these Gospels in the general setting of N.T. theology. (3) Our author holds that Bultmann over-estimates the value of the existentialist philosophy (of Heidegger's type), as a means of de-mythologising. (4) A profounder appreciation of the value of mythological language is given us here. "A Christianity which jettisons the so-called mythological element in the N.T. Christology instead of retaining it in the knowledge that it is mythological not only impoverishes itself but weakens its own historical-biblical roots" (281).

The main body of the book is divided into four parts: (i) Prolegomena; (ii) The Problem of the Mythological; (iii) Kyrios Christos; (iv) The Myth as Logos. In the two chapters included under (i), Mr. Jones gives us a careful and illuminating survey of Bultmann's standpoint. He shows the mingling of several different strands in his thought, examines his terminology, and defines his affinities with and differences from earlier Liberalism. Among the main criticisms offered is this: "Ultimately the existential encounter between the ever-contemporary Cross and the Christian to the exclusion of the 'historical' Jesus must lead to a kind of mysticism without factual content" (42).

Part Two offers a preliminary survey of the "mythological" elements in the N.T. and discusses their interpretation by means of modern philosophical categories. The author assembles the passages which he considers to be most mythological in background and content, and argues that the conceptions of Christ as personalised Logos, as pre-existent Co-Creator of the universe, as principle of cosmic cohesion, and the "kenotic" conception, are mythological in form, and that they do not occur in the earliest records of the kerygma nor in Jesus' own view of Sonship. He holds firmly to the unique Sonship of Christ. The language of the N.T. may be interpreted in such a way as to disregard its mythological content without sacrificing its essential meaning which is "the affirmation of the supreme Lordship of Jesus Christ over all life and his pre-eminence over nature both human and cosmic" (100). An interesting account is given of Thornton's argument in *The Incarnate Lord*, as an example of a philosophical de-mythologisation of the Gospel in contemporary terms.

Part III comprises four chapters which are in various ways explicative of the Lordship of Christ. The first enquires into the N.T. usage of the word Kyrios, and suggests that it is the most comprehensive Christological term, because it "belongs to the human series in so far as it refers to a historical personality, and also to the more-than-historical and more-than-personal dimension through transcendence over history." Mr. Jones argues

for an "anagogic" Christology (i.e. one which emphasises the "taking of the Manhood into God") rather than a "katagogic" (which represents a pre-existent Divine being "descending" to live a human life). Chapters 2 and 3 in this section deal with various aspects of the Lordship of Christ in relation to Creation. Chapter 2 deals with His transcendence over the created order, the main themes being the cosmic centrality of Christ and the redemption of creation. It is acknowledged that Bultmann is largely right in stressing that modern faith considers the experience of redemption existentially rather than cosmologically. Chapter 3 deals with the immanence of Christ in creation, and seeks to preserve a balance between the two aspects of Christ's solidarity and continuity with humanity on the one hand, and "discontinuous newness which implies interruption and transcendence" on the other hand. Jesus both belonged to creation and embodies what is beyond it. The fourth chapter in Part III, entitled "The Lordship of Jesus and the New Testament Mythology of Evil," gives a good account of the N.T. conception of evil, dealing especially with the emphasis on demonic powers. It is argued that, while these beliefs are mythological in form, there is much in them which corresponds to the tragic realities of our world. The author makes a plea for a realistic conception of Christ's lordship over evil; he boldly takes Barth, Cullmann, and Brunner to task, for misleading teaching as to Christ's victory over evil.

The main contribution of Part IV is to defend the significance of mythological language as "pictorial, symbolical, and archetypal," differing definitely from abstract and conceptual thought, but still playing an important part psychologically in the maintenance of the Christian faith. It provides "permanent points of reference without which Christianity would dissolve into metaphysics or ethics." Thus, while it is to be interpreted, poetically and metaphorically, it may become the vehicle of Divine address and challenge to us, and so the "mythos" may become the "logos."

The above summary, sketchy and selective as it inevitably is, will give some indication of the scope and thoroughness of this discussion. Readers of theological journals know how well-versed Mr. Jones is in the philosophy and theology of Continental thinkers, and he has chosen a theme for this book which affords him ample opportunity of conducting a discussion toward which many contributions have been made outside Britain. But we are greatly indebted to him not only for the way in which he has laid others under tribute, but also for his own resolute and penetrating thinking. The only misgiving which we have about the book is that the extreme concentration of thought together with the use of a somewhat recondite terminology may make too heavy a demand upon many potential readers. In some parts the material might perhaps have been differently arranged to advantage; some of the transitions of thought from the New Testament to modern philosophy and theology, and back again to the N.T. are apt to be rather disconcerting. On a number of points of detail, readers may well feel moved to disagreement, or may at least desiderate fuller consideration, e.g., does not the author lay too much stress on the teaching to be found in the Synoptic Gospels and the earliest form of the kerygma? Do not these point beyond themselves and call for fuller theological articulation? Even so, are there not the hints of a Wisdom-Christology in the Synoptic Gospels themselves? Is the kenosis passage of *Philippians*, ii necessarily as "mythological" as is often supposed? (especially if the suggestion made by Wheeler Robinson and others be accepted, that the verb "kenow" echoes the verb in *Isaiah* liii. 12, used of "emptying oneself to death," and the primary emphasis in the passage should thus be on the Crucifixion rather than on the Incarnation). Other controversial issues are raised at various stages of the argument. But this is a learned and valuable contribution which grapples

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