

Reviews

British Baptists in China, 1845-1952, by H. R. Williamson. (Carey Kingsgate Press, London, 21s.)

Dr. Williamson has written this history "to provide a record of the work of British Baptists in China," and especially that of the Baptist Missionary Society. After a brief look at previous Nestorian and Roman Catholic missions, and the beginning of Protestant work, the book gives us a systematic and detailed account of B.M.S. work as it developed across a large area of North China. The story ends in 1952 when the forced withdrawal of all B.M.S. staff was completed. The next section deals with the variety of methods used in the total programme of Mission and Church. The last part attempts to assess results achieved in the light of difficulties encountered, and the ability of the Church in China to survive under the present Communist-dominated government.

The book will be of interest to all who have a concern for Baptist work overseas, and in the China mission of our own Society. Much careful research has gone into the history. It recalls the service of a great number of missionaries and nationals who, through an almost incredible series of wars and civil wars, have been instruments in God's hands for the calling out and building up of His church in China. The quality of its leadership is shown in a message from the Shensi Synod to the B.M.S. as missionaries left that province in 1951, and recorded on page 196. It is a notable and courageous statement in an era of mud-slinging!

The story itself is a notable one, and for this reason it seems a pity that there is so much background material. This, though excellent, can be found elsewhere, but the full story of Baptist work in China is being told here for the first time. It is a record that deserves fuller treatment. Our appetites are whetted rather than satisfied! The last section is the least satisfactory of the whole. It does not take serious account of the criticisms of Mission and Church policy raised since the withdrawal. The slowness of development from the "mission-station approach" to the truly indigenous church cannot be dealt with merely in terms of external difficulties. The questions about the effectiveness of much institutional work, and the lack of balance between resources for institutions and those for the direct church and evangelistic task, seem to be explained away. The attempt is made to justify the use made by Missions of extra-territorial rights, forced from China by war, to do their work and protect their converts. Our Chinese colleagues themselves have said this was a mistake and a great

hindrance to the work of the gospel. Must we not say the same? The opinion is expressed that our Chinese church leaders were "by no means ignorant of the nature and challenge of Communism." But those who lived beside them under the new conditions saw their utter bewilderment. They were better prepared for persecution than for the total adjustment demanded of them in living and witnessing under the new régime as the established, lawful government of the country. For this we had not prepared them.

These questions—of Mission—Government—Church relationships—of the achievement of indigenous churches—are of fundamental importance, for they affect our work on other fields. The trenchant criticism that came to us, much of it from our fellow-workers, provides an unprecedented (and surely God-given) opportunity to think through both achievements and failures. Are we to learn from our experience or not? It is here that work still has to be done. Dr. Williamson's valuable history and review of the B.M.S. China mission should serve to give us fresh material and opportunity to do this.

There are some bad printing errors for a major book. Should not the date 735 on p. 1 be 635, as in section 1 below? Cambaluc is three times wrongly spelt on pp. 3 and 4, and Hitchin on p. 192. There are proofing errors on pp. 113, 156, 186 (where Shanghai is in the far West!) and 344.

J. SUTTON

The Plan of Church Union for North India and Pakistan—a Summary from a Baptist Point of View, and Baptist Pamphlets on Church Union. I. Introductory.

We have received these two leaflets from the Rev. E. L. Wenger, of Serampore College, Serampore, West Bengal, the leader of the Baptist delegation in discussions on church union in North India and Pakistan.

The first leaflet runs to six quarto pages, printed in two columns, and giving the background to union, a summary of the constitution, comments on the inauguration of union and the proposed declaration of principle of the Baptist churches. At certain key-points, there are insertions in italics, drawing attention to those points which Baptists need to consider with special care. The second leaflet runs to four octavo pages, containing nineteen questions and answers on union. Both are extremely well done, and provide a first-rate guide to the scheme of reunion for British Baptists. They should be widely read, and the points they raise most carefully considered.

A. GILMORE

St. John's Gospel. A Commentary by R. H. Lightfoot. Edited by C. F. Evans. (Oxford University Press, 30s.)

In his *Gospel Message of St. Mark* and in the present volume we have Dr. Lightfoot's last legacies to students of the New Testament; in fact this commentary is posthumously published, and its readers owe a great debt of gratitude to Mr. C. F. Evans for his careful editing throughout, and especially for his work on the introductory chapters.

It may be that his last two books will be regarded as containing Dr. Lightfoot's most valuable and enduring contribution to the study of the Gospels; his earlier works, *History and Interpretation in the Gospels*, and *Locality and Doctrine in the Gospels* were to a considerable extent devoted to the presentation of recent emphasis in Continental scholarship to English readers. In his last two books, and especially in the present commentary, he is more directly concerned with the exposition of the Scriptural text, and one feels that this is his most mature and magisterial work.

The commentary was originally designed to be one of the Clarendon series, but it greatly exceeds the limits observed by that series in general. At the same time, it does not depart altogether from the format and manner of presentation adopted by other Clarendon commentaries; thus the English text of the Revised Version is printed, points of language and text are not discussed at length, the use of footnotes is very sparing, and references to the work of other scholars are comparatively few. These features enable the commentator to concentrate in undistracted fashion on theological exposition, and it is this above all else which he regards as important in the interpretation of this Gospel.

The Introduction (pp. 1-76) deals with six themes: The Origins of the Gospel—The Text—Plan and Structure—Relation to the Synoptic Gospels—The Background (Jewish and Greek)—The Portraiture of the Lord. The following selected points may give an indication of Lightfoot's general approach to the Gospel. In an inconclusive discussion of the problem of authorship, he points out how the course of detailed study of the matter has shown how difficult it is. Interest has shifted considerably since the time of Westcott away from the question of authorship to the questions of the author's background of thought and the identity of the readers whom he had in view, while it has been increasingly acknowledged that the value of the work does not stand or fall with its attribution to the son of Zebedee. On the question of the relation of the Fourth Gospel to the Synoptics, Lightfoot gives respectful mention to Gardner-Smith's attempt to prove the complete independence of John, but comes down definitely in favour of the use of the Synoptics. "Nevertheless this book is written in the belief that the evangelist knew not only the synoptic tradition,

but the three synoptic gospels themselves" (29). "It seems to me that St. John's gospel, if considered by itself in isolation, is a riddle; but that if it is regarded as the crown and completion of our gospel records, it falls forthwith into place" (32). Much of what is said in, this connection recalls W. F. Howard's treatment of the "explicative" function of the Fourth Gospel, while some of the illuminating comments on the plan and structure of the Gospel, and on the close inter-relation of its various sections reinforce C. H. Dodd's similar observations in his *Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*. While admitting the apparent attraction of rearrangements of the text, Lightfoot joins Dodd and Barratt among recent writers in rejecting them as mistaken. The discussion of the Jewish and Greek backgrounds is set forth in lucid and masterly fashion; both "had a distinctive and necessary contribution to make to Christianity; but at the same time each had to undergo a certain transformation, and to be marked with the sign of the cross, before it could make its contribution" (55).

We cannot attempt to do any justice to the "Expositions" and "Notes" which follow in the body of the Commentary proper. The Expositions are full and detailed, revealing great insight into Johannine thought and establishing inter-connections between different parts of the Gospel with fine skill and discrimination. We note that Lightfoot disagrees with Dodd's (non-sacrificial) interpretation of the "Lamb of God" (i 29) and his view that "paschal allusions in the gospel are by no means clear or certain" (see pp. 96, 97, and the Appended Note: "The Lord the true passover feast," 349-356). At certain points, readers will undoubtedly feel that the commentator is over-subtle in his suggestions, though one has a due sense of reserve in this connection when the Fourth Gospel is in question! But it is doubtful how far Lightfoot will win the assent of his readers in suggesting that in xvii. 12 "St. John invites those who welcome his interpretation of the Gospel to see in Judas 'the man of sin, the son of perdition'" referred to in II *Thess.* ii. 3 (since the day of the Lord is regarded as realised in the life, the work, and above all the death of Jesus Christ). Again many will feel that it is unconvincing to take the expression generally rendered "and he gave up his spirit" (xix. 30) as meaning "he handed over the new dispensation of Spirit" (though it may be noted that Hoskyns argued for this interpretation as "not only possible but necessary").

But, however, one may respond to certain disputable points of interpretation, there can be no question that to follow Dr. Lightfoot in his exposition of this Gospel is a most profitable experience, and there are times when, as someone put it with regard to his book on Mark, we seem to be "listening to the whispering of fascinating secrets." As a work which concentrates

so pre-eminently on exposition, with comparatively little concern for linguistic and critical details, it should prove helpful for preaching purposes, and amply reward all who are prepared to attend to profound and close-knit thought set forth in fastidiously careful language. Many of us will prize greatly this last and characteristic work of our revered teacher.

D. R. GRIFFITHS

Why Integration? by Ernest A. Payne and David G. Moses. (Edinburgh House Press, 2s. 6d.)

To those people who are interested in the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council, as well as to those who feel their lack of knowledge on both movements, this little book presents a mine of information; the fact that it does it at a price within the reach of every man's pocket ought to make it a "must" for all ministers and thinking people.

Readers of the *Quarterly* will be aware of the discussions which are now taking place between the W.C.C. and the I.M.C., with a view to the closer integration of the two bodies. This book seeks to explain these proposals, indicating the reasons that have produced them. Dr. Payne's qualifications for such a task are well-known among Baptists, but perhaps it should be said that Dr. Moses is a College Principal, a Vice-Chairman of the I.M.C., and a member of the United Church of North India and Pakistan.

The greater portion of the book is contained in the Appendices (52 pages), and the information that is given here is the sort which many a man will be glad to have on his shelves in such a handy form. One Appendix, for instance, sets out the constitution of the W.C.C., another that of the I.M.C. One gives a list of member churches and of councils associated with the W.C.C., and another lists member councils of the IM.C. A fifth Appendix gives the minutes of the joint committee of the W.C.C. and I.M.C., dated July 23-27, 1957, and incorporating the draft plan of integration.

The minor portion of the book (28 pages) supplies the reader with information about the histories of the two bodies, and their relationships with each other, followed by some comments on the draft plan and some points for consideration.

Broadly speaking, what it means is that the W.C.C. will create a *Division of World Mission and Evangelism*, comparable to the present divisional units within the present W.C.C. A Director of the Division of World Mission and Evangelism will be appointed, and he will also be an *Associate General Secretary of the W.C.C.*

The authors say that what has been in mind is "not the merging or absorption of one organisation in another, but the building of a new structure which can more adequately care for the concerns of both. It is important that this be realised" (p. 20). It is indeed! For in the nature of the case, it does rather look as if "integration" in this context means that the I.M.C. will become a branch of the W.C.C. That would not necessarily mean that the plan was defective, but the fact that that is how it appears helps to explain the hostility which some supporters of the I.M.C. feel towards the scheme.

On the other hand, within the Plan itself, good reasons for the integration are produced. It is pointed out that in our day a basic and long-forgotten truth is being re-discovered, viz. "The *unity* of the Church and the *mission* of the Church both belong, in equal degree, to the *essence* of the Church" (p. 29). This principle has been working itself out in the closer "association" which there has been, especially in recent years, between the two councils. Moreover, pressure has come from churches and councils which desire to be associated with a single organisation, concerned both with the unity and with the mission of the church.

And if all this work can be done through one body (and there does not appear to be any good reason why it should not), then it appears so obviously sensible to bring the two together. That there are difficulties, nobody in his senses will doubt, and it is freely conceded within the Plan that "No plan can by itself ensure the spiritual integration which is our deepest desire" (p. 32); yet it is to be hoped that this Plan, even if in a modified form, will eventually be such as to commend itself to both sides. Meanwhile we are indebted to Dr. Payne and to Dr. Moses for giving us such useful information, and for so carefully clarifying the issues for us.

The Christian Tradition and the Unity We Seek, by Albert C. Outler. (Oxford University Press, 12s. 6d.)

One thing which the World Council of Churches said when it met at Evanston was: "We intend to stay together." Progress since the previous meeting had been so great that it was obvious that the constituent churches must stay together and work together. One sometimes wonders what will be said when the Council next meets in 1960 (or 1961). Has real progress been made since Evanston, or will the next Council feel that we have only been talking about the same old things in the same old way?

The writer of this book apparently fears the latter verdict, for it is his view that the ecumenical movement is in danger of stagnating, unless a new and living interest in it can be quickened among intelligent and sympathetic people. He suggests that now attention

should be directed to three things: God's community, the continuity of Christian history and God's tradition. And this is the theme which he here develops, being the 1955 Richard Lectures in the University of Virginia.

According to Dr. Outler, "the ecumenical honeymoon is over," and many of the problems that have come to the surface, such as the doctrines of the church, ministry and sacraments, he regards as "insoluble." What matters vitally at this stage, therefore, is not what we decide or do, but "the atmosphere or temper" in which we propose to live with each other, while we go on working with these "insoluble" problems that confront us.

The author himself describes his work as a "tract for the times," and so it is. There is much truth in the basic position which he adopts, and much wisdom in what he suggests by way of solution. Yet one cannot help but feel that he is best when he is expounding the problems, and then again when he is drawing his conclusions. For a "tract for the times" there is something rather remote and academic about the remainder of the book, most of which would lead the reader to pause, reflect and examine, rather than brace him for further action.

A. GILMORE

The Study of Missions in Theological Education. An historical enquiry into the place of world evangelization in Western Protestant ministerial training with particular reference to Alexander Duff's Chair of Evangelistic Theology. Vol. 2, 1910-50. (Egede Instituttet, Oslo).

The author's first volume (reviewed in *Baptist Quarterly*, Vol. XVI, No. 6) carried this important investigation up to 1910. In two lengthy chapters he now traces developments as far as 1950. The book bears all the same marks of able and devoted scholarship as did the first. Once again Mr. Myklebust adopts the method of the "scientific" rather than the "literary" historian and if this means that occasionally the account becomes something of a catalogue, the facts set out all contribute to the case which he builds up, as well as providing a store of information.

At Edinburgh in 1910 voices were raised which pleaded for the worthy treatment of Missions or "Missiology" in places of theological education. In the subsequent decades there has been a steadily increasing recognition of the world-wide setting and mission of the Church. This has been reflected in the work of major theologians and Church historians on both sides of the Atlantic. On this side however the study of Missions has not generally won a place for itself as a distinct discipline standing in its own right in the curricula of theological colleges or among the subjects prescribed as required or optional in theological degrees. In Britain the question

has been felt to be not one of "addition" but of "orientation." In so far as the subject has penetrated the basic academic work of the colleges it has been by a process of infiltration, of colouring rather than conquest.

In America the scene is very different. That country is responsible for "about half of the world mission's resources in personnel and more than two-thirds of its total resources in funds," and it can be claimed that it is the seminaries which constitute "the most important link in the chain" of this whole effort. Chairs and lectureships abound and in many places—not only those specialising in the training of missionaries—the subject of missions either may or must be taken.

With some qualifications the author would say that the major contribution by theologians has come from those of the conservative Biblical wing; among the denominations he would give the laurel to the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches. Baptist readers will warm to the tributes paid to K. S. Latourette: "the greatest missionary scholar that America has produced," and to the American Baptist interest generally. There, in proportion to the number of its seminaries, "no church family has made a greater contribution to the teaching of Missions than the Baptist group." E. A. Payne's efforts to gain some recognition for the subject in the Oxford School of Theology are also noted. Generally speaking, however, this book presents us in Europe with room for heart-searching both as to the scope and the methods whereby this whole subject is handled. Is the author simply an idealist? Many who read these volumes will feel that his message is an urgent one and his challenge needs an answer.

One thing is certain. Any individual, college or denomination wishing to undertake serious study or instruction in this field will find here a most useful starting-point. The bibliographies alone would make it invaluable. As a survey the ground covered is so vast that it inevitably suffers somewhat from compression yet it gains so much in comprehensiveness that this is but slight criticism. There can be few if any of the significant means of missionary instruction—literary or institutional—in Western Protestantism which have been overlooked.

G. W. RUSLING