

## Reviews

J. D. Hughey: *Die Kirchen Der Welt*. Band 2. Die Baptisten. DM 28. 282 pp. Evangelisches Verlagswerk. Stuttgart.

The Evangelisches Verlagswerk in Stuttgart is issuing a series of volumes on "The Churches of the World". Some of the volumes will present the history, doctrines and practices of the churches; others will deal with special theological issues or offer source material. The purpose of the series is to make a contribution to the ecumenical conversations in which the churches are engaged.

The first volume on the Orthodox Churches is now succeeded by volume II on the Baptists. The editor is Dr. J. D. Hughey, formerly principal of the Rüschnikon Theological Seminary; his skilful arrangement of the material guarantees a measure of orderliness and unity in the book. Since the aim is that each denomination shall speak for itself, nineteen contributors offer chapters and represent the Baptist fellowship in several different parts of the world. There are three British writers: J. B. Middlebrook on "Evangelisation and Mission", G. R. Beasley-Murray on "Believers' Baptism" and W. M. S. West on "History of the English Baptists".

The book falls into two parts; the first sets out the principles and practices of Baptists, the second the growth of Baptists and their relationships among themselves and with other Christians. In part one there are three chapters on baptism which the editor justifies on the ground that the differences between Baptists and other Christians centre very largely on the doctrine and mode of baptism. This may well be true, although, as Dr. Luckey points out, Baptists represent a movement centred in the church rather than baptism. The chapters on baptism are well written; nevertheless, there is a good deal of repetition which perhaps one longer chapter might have avoided.

Two chapters on the doctrine of the church follow those on baptism. The first by Dr. Luckey on the local church summarises clearly the traditional Baptist concept, though many would not accept his account of the ministry, with its distinction of a charismatic ministry of preacher, evangelist, teacher and missionary, and an authorised or appointed ministry of elders and deacons. The pastor seems to have disappeared altogether!. The second deals with questions of autonomy and co-operation. Here J. A. Brandsma rightly says that Baptists value highly the autonomy and independence of the local church, but he adds that this requires also the spirit of co-operation and fellowship. Much more

might have been said about the way in which many Baptists today are thinking of the church.

After statements about Baptists and Religious Freedom by Dr. Westin, and Educational Institutions by Dr. Gaines Dobbins, there is an interesting chapter on "Growing Interest in Social Questions" by Dr. G. Lahrson, which suggests both the achievements and limitations of Baptists in this field. He is surely right in pleading that Baptists must bring their evangelistic activities into relationship with social factors in human life, and recognise the necessity of meeting some social needs by changes in economic and political structures.

What is surprising about this first half of the book is the omission of any section on worship and the Lord's Supper. The editor argues that Baptists have no characteristic doctrine of worship; they share with all Christians an emphasis on worship, with Protestants a rejection of sacerdotal and sacramental worship, and with many evangelical Christians a mode of worship marked by simplicity and informality. Yet there is much more to be said than this, and a section on worship might well have displaced one of the chapters on baptism.

The second part of the book describes adequately and informatively the history and expansion of Baptist churches, and concludes with a chapter on "Baptists and other Christians". This is largely an attempt to show that Baptists have always been willing to cooperate, and it ends with some useful suggestions about contemporary ecumenical tasks. Baptists must give more thought to the New Testament concept of unity; they must enter ecumenical discussions; they must seek new relations with other similar Christian communities; they must become more catholic in including all types of people in their fellowship.

The whole book is in German, and should serve a useful purpose in German speaking countries for, as the editors of the series state, Baptists are not well known in such countries, and are sometimes despised as sectaries. Would it be a good book in English? If some of the material were condensed so that the book is shorter, it could make a useful paperback and provide a good contribution to an understanding of our history, world-wide fellowship, position in doctrine and practice.

L. G. CHAMPION.

J. Daniélou and H. Marrou : *The Christian Centuries. Vol. I. The First Six Hundred Years.* 522 pp. 50s. Darton, Longman and Todd.

This is the first instalment of a new Roman Catholic history of the Church which it is planned to complete in five volumes. The

work as a whole is under the distinguished editorship of L. J. Rogier of Nijmegen, R. Aubert of Louvain, and M. D. Knowles the well-known British medievalist, lately Regius Professor of History at Cambridge. Dom Knowles' general introduction, in which he discusses certain of the problems confronting the Church historian, is typical in its insight and fineness of expression.

In *The First Six Hundred Years*, two scholars well-versed in the patristic field have divided the period and the pages available. The Jesuit scholar, J. Daniélou, takes the story to the end of the third century and Professor Henri Marrou of Paris takes it from there to the emergence of medieval Christianity, concluding with a chapter foreshadowing the conversion of northern Europe. The competence of a book from these hands goes without saying. Much recent work is presupposed or alluded to in, for example, Daniélou's chapter on Gnosticism. In Marrou's section monasticism and the Christological disputes seem to be particularly well dealt with. The writers' confessional standpoint naturally emerges from time to time as when it is stated that the superiority of virginity to marriage was never questioned in the primitive Church. Nevertheless the scholarship of the authors takes them a long way towards the ideal expressed by Knowles in his introduction, "The historian (as such) is not and must not be an apologist or a controversialist."

Although it is stated that the work "does not aim at becoming a universal text-book for examinations, nor at being a work of reference in which all notable names and significant dates may be found" the book has several features which aid a student. In addition to the supplementary bibliography provided for every chapter the book is enriched by forty-eight photographic plates. These, though sometimes presented in too crowded a fashion, have been skilfully chosen and the notes accompanying them are well done by P. Ludlow. Then again there is a splendid supply of maps, the majority being related to the text of Part 2. They could well have been made even more useful. The maps of African and Spanish churches appear to have a bad attack of the measles, so many are the dots and spots marking places unidentified by name. One is aware that topography can influence history but it is curious to find that the one feature included in nearly all the maps is "Mountains over 3,000 feet". There must be some special significance in that datum but it is not yet clear to me.

There is much to commend about this book but the real question is, who to commend it to? The writers have had the task of covering six centuries in 460 pages of text and this means that everything has had to be severely compressed. The chapter on Gnosticism, mentioned earlier, is twelve pages long; the Apologists are dealt with in less than four. This is therefore but a survey

and could hardly be anything more. As such it is difficult to see what special clientele it will serve beyond the Roman circles in which, understandably, it will be much recommended to the reader who simply wants a quick tour through these centuries with the main landmarks pointed out en route. Such surveys have their own useful function for the serious student too but the point is that others exist already. We have, for example, Latourette's, which in one volume of 1,500 pages covers the entire course of Christian history (at the price of three guineas) which the present project plans to do in five volumes (presumably for something like twelve guineas). One's verdict must therefore be that for non-Roman readers this book does not appear to meet any very pressing need although it has undeniable merits.

G. W. RUSLING.

J. Daniélou : *A History of Early Christian Doctrines. Vol. I: The Theology of Jewish Christianity.* 446 pp. 45s. Darton, Longman and Todd.

This is the first in a series of three volumes planned to cover the development of Christian doctrine up to, though not including, the Council of Nicaea in A.D. 325. The writer is a Roman Catholic scholar of international repute whose intimate knowledge of his subject is matched by the clarity of its presentation. His analysis of source material is quite masterly and the presentation of his argument a delight to read.

It has been customary for students of early Christian doctrine to begin serious study with the Apostolic Fathers and the Apologists and to trace the growth of dogmatic belief in terms of the Hellenistic culture within which it came to express itself. There is, however, an earlier stage of development than this which is of the utmost importance for a study of Christian origins, the theology of Jewish Christianity which finds expression not only in the New Testament itself but also—and at times in even more primitive forms—in extra-canonical writings. In this connection a vast new area of study has been opened up since 1946 by the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Gnostic text from Nag Hammadi in Egypt. Much material for such study was already to hand in the apocryphal and pseudepigraphal writings of the Old and New Testaments, in early liturgical texts such as the Didache and the Odes of Solomon, in manuals like the Epistle of Barnabas and the Shepherd of Hermas, in the Greek and Latin Fathers and in Gnostic texts of a diverse kind. The discoveries at Qumran and in Egypt in large measure help to solve the riddle of Jewish Christianity posed in these writings, disclosing a body of theology primitive in its expression and homogeneous in its form. With

considerable patience and skill the writer assembles diverse pieces of information, as in a giant jig-saw puzzle, and fits them neatly together to form a fascinating picture of early Christian doctrine which gives fresh understanding at a number of points to the New Testament itself and emphasises how deeply significant for Christian origins was the transition from the Semitic to the Hellenistic way of life.

After examining all the available material, both orthodox and heterodox, the author fills in his picture section by section: the bearing of a widespread belief in angels on the doctrine of the Trinity, the significance of the several names ascribed to the Son of God, the esoteric character of Christian belief concerning the nature of the universe and the problem of evil, the mystery of the Incarnation and Christ's descent through all the orders of angels, his descent into hell in his mission of redemption, the image of "the glorious Cross" which acts like a human being accompanying the risen Christ and ascending with him to heaven, the conception of the Church with its instruction and preparation for Baptism and the Eucharist and their accompanying rites, the liturgical and hierarchical structure of the Church, the ascetic practices of at least some branches of it and its pre-occupation with eschatological hopes, particularly that of millenarianism.

This detailed analysis makes clear how great was the influence on Jewish Christian theology of that form of Judaism contemporary with Christ known as "apocalyptic" whose "gnosis" encouraged the esoteric exegesis of Scripture (cf. especially the speculative exegesis of the early chapters of Genesis) and emphasised the cosmic proportions of divine redemption. Of particular interest is the influence in the early Christian community of Essene doctrine and practice as, for example, its teaching concerning "the Two Spirits" of light and darkness, its rites of sacred washings and sacred meals and the organisation of its community life, all of which are now seen to be of much greater significance for Christian origins than was hitherto realised.

This book is a masterly presentation of its subject which will whet the readers' appetites for the two succeeding volumes.

D. S. RUSSELL.

Max Warren: *Perspective in Mission*. 125 pp. 16s. Hodder and Stoughton.

Now free of the responsibilities of General Secretary of the largest of British missionary societies and in the comparative quiet of the cloisters of Westminster, Dr. Max Warren is gathering together for publication papers and lectures which he has read on various occasions. This volume includes six such, related to one

another by the common theme of "perspective", defined in the first of them as "the proportion in which parts of a subject are viewed by the mind".

Chapter one contains the substance of a lecture given first to the Theological Faculty of King's College, London. Like the rest of the book it gives evidence of the author's wide reading, alert thinking, and power of discrimination. He sees the present generation in Britain as a very baffled one and suggests that the experiences of the nation in the last twenty years accounts for this. Prior to 1875 characteristics of the British people were curiosity, commerce and a sense of missions; these combining to produce a nation of extroverts. The following twenty years 1875-95 were years of imperialism—an aberration for British people, but profoundly affecting their psychology. Now the nation has seen its historical development going into reverse; and contracting horizons have led to a paralysis of the will and induced a mood of self-criticism. The old confidence and sense of mission are gone. Yet seen in true perspective the British churches have a continuing and enlarging mission which can be considered in three aspects: geographically, in relation to the growing understanding of the needs of people throughout the world; psychologically, in relation to the search of all men everywhere for God; cosmically, in relation to the evolution towards the summing up of all things in Christ. These three aspects he relates to the Pauline triad of faith, hope, and love.

The second chapter is entitled "Religions in Perspective". It is in two parts, the former considering the meeting of a Christian man with a Muslim, the latter enumerating seven principles which should determine the way of approach to men of other faiths. Here there is a welcome recognition of the fact that in this world we have to deal not with religions but with religious men and women—a point often overlooked in comparative studies of religion! The author expresses a view, which is becoming more and more widely held, that with men of all faiths God is present, and in their minds the Holy Spirit is at work. What he writes on the problem of approach, interpretation, and testimony are very relevant to the task of evangelism confronting the churches in Britain itself.

A discussion of the replies received to a questionnaire submitted to seventeen friends in relation to the thesis "that the new churches of the Far East and Africa will have to make their own doctrines and not be controlled by ours" forms the substance of the third chapter. Then follows a more closely reasoned paper prepared some two years ago, on "The Concept of Power" in which are discussed among other matters the responsibility of the "Establishment", the nature of authority in the church (with a glance at the doctrine of apostolic succession), and the right

exercise of power by Christians. What he says about decentralization of power is not irrelevant for Baptists. "In church affairs a managerial structure is being encouraged in the name of efficiency. In all conscience more efficiency is needed, but it is by no means self-evident that centralization of authority and direction ensures efficiency in what is the particular function of the church, its pastoral and evangelistic activity."

The fifth chapter presents a most stimulating and fresh approach to theological training. A scheme of study is outlined and appropriate text-books are suggested. Indeed the book is worth purchasing and reading by ministers and teachers for this one section of no more than ten pages. The final chapter deals with the ministry of the church in the present situation as shared by both clergy and laity.

In short compass then, there are the reflexions, well informed and stimulating, of one who has been long involved in affairs relating to the mission of the church.

A. S. CLEMENT.

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