

# Reviews

*The Old Testament : an Introduction* by Otto Eissfeldt (translated by Peter R. Ackroyd). Oxford. Basil Blackwell. 1965. xxiv + 861 pp. 70s.

The word 'monumental' is sometimes applied rather indiscriminately to books with more pages than most but whose thickness bears no relation to their worth. This cannot be said of Otto Eissfeldt's *Introduction*, first published in 1934 and now translated into English from the 1964 (third) edition by P. R. Ackroyd. The translation is quite excellent and the substantial additions by Professor Ackroyd both in notes and in bibliographical references have greatly enhanced its value. Such references at the beginning of each chapter, in copious footnotes and in a long section of 64 pages at the end of the book are among its most valuable features.

Baptist readers will no doubt take a special pride in the fact that this masterly book is dedicated to 'the representatives of three generations of British Old Testament Scholarship: Theodore H. Robinson, Harold H. Rowley and Aubrey R. Johnson'. For many years past Baptists have had several names in the forefront of Old Testament scholarship, and to have three of their 'sons' mentioned together in such a 'dedication' is, to say the least, highly satisfactory.

The format of this volume is similar to that of many other Old Testament Introductions in that it gives a careful analysis of the several books, following this up with an account of the history of the Canon and an examination of the development of the text in its various versions and recensions. It differs from most, however, in its treatment at the very outset of those many small units of speech in the form of sermons, prayers, records, narratives, proverbs and songs which mark the pre-literary stage, viewing them within their 'setting in life', and in its examination of literary units of different kinds which underlie the several books as we now have them.

In the section dealing with the Canon consideration is given to the claims of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, followed by an analysis of each book and of related literature found more recently at Qumran and neighbouring sites. The author's treatment of the Pentateuch is of particular interest in that he postulates a Lay Source (*signum* 'L') which he disentangles from the familiar 'J' source and dates in the period 950-850 B.C. This strand of tradition, continuing into the Books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and possibly Kings, reflects the primitive nomadic ideal.

If any criticism is to be made of this almost encyclopaedic volume it is that its proportions are at times not quite what one would

altogether expect. For example, despite the earlier treatment of psalm and proverb-material, the amount of space given to the Psalter and the Book of Proverbs does seem to be disproportionately small. But this is a very minor criticism of a book which is a veritable mine of information and an indispensable tool for the scholar and all serious readers of the Old Testament and related literature.

Note: A few printers' errors have escaped the eagle eye of the proof reader—the omission of the letter 's' on page 305 line 6, the omission of several vowel points from Hebrew words on pages xiii and 304, and the insertion of Arabic characters in a Syriac word on page 699!

D. S. RUSSELL

*Studies in Church History II.* Ed. G. J. Cuming. London, Nelson. 1965. pp. viii + 337. 70s.

This collection of papers read to the Ecclesiastical History Society in 1963 contains seven major studies together with seventeen shorter contributions. Among these papers are several, with which this review is chiefly concerned, relating to English Reformation and Puritanism. It should, however, be noted that those chiefly interested in Early and Medieval church history would also find much to interest them.

Whilst almost all the papers make worthwhile contributions to the subjects with which they deal the final reaction of the general reader is likely to be to regret that so many short papers, of a fragmentary nature, have appeared and that there were not more longer contributions. On the other hand the specialist will be grateful for several essays which, easily accessible now between stiff covers, will stimulate and inform his own investigations.

One example of an over-brief contribution is J. A. F. Thomson's limited discussion of the value of Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* as a source for Lollard studies. Foxe comes out of the investigation with 'reasonable credit,' (p. 257) with the need, once more underlined, for a fully critical edition of that part of his work relating to the English Reformation. J. N. Bakhuizen van den Brink suggests, in a study of "Ratramn's Eucharistic Doctrine and its influence in 16th century England" in which, perhaps, he deals over-gently with Professor Dugmore, that Peter Martyr was probably the first to introduce Ratramn's views in England. A most interesting paper by Joel Hurstfield on the contribution of the Cecils, father and son, as politicians to the creation of the Anglican *via media* shows William less sympathetic to the Puritans and Robert less violently opposed to the papists than has often been thought. For the Elizabethan period there are three interesting short studies: one by Dr. Patrick Collinson concerned with the Puritan matron,

Anne Locke, another by M. C. Cross concerned with Francis Hastings, a country gentleman and patron of Puritans under both Elizabeth and James I, and one by Dr. Leland Carlson reviewing the work done and requiring to be done on the Separatists. Such a review is the more welcome since Dr. Carlson is currently supplying a vast labour in this field himself. Alongside this work is a brief contribution from Mrs. A. C. Carter to supplement her useful book on *The English Reformed Church at Amsterdam* with further details of the activities of English Puritans abroad. Such riches, including a paper from Basil Hall of Cambridge pleading for the use of the word Puritan to be confined to the period 1570-1640, with major essays from other leading scholars make this book a joy to possess, especially as those scholars include Dr. Dugmore on the Eucharist, Dr. Ratcliff on Baptism, Sir Stephen Runciman on the Greek Church under the Ottomans, Dr. Ullmann on the medieval Papacy and Dr. Greenslade on Pastoral Care in the Early Church.

B. R. WHITE

*Visible Saints*, by Edmund S. Morgan. New York, Cornell University Press, 1965. 159 pp. \$1.45. (Oxford University Press 10s.).

*The Legend of the Founding Fathers*, by Wesley Frank Craven. New York, Cornell University Press, 1965. 222 pp. \$1.95 (Oxford University Press. 16s.).

We may well be grateful to the Oxford University Press for making easily available in this country these two important issues in the attractively published Cornell Paperbacks series.

Professor Morgan presents what he calls "The History of a Puritan Idea", adopting a title used by Dr. Geoffrey Nuttall because the term became as true and important in New England as it was in this country. The thesis of these Anson G. Phelps lectures is that the practice of testing prospective Church Members for "signs of saving grace" (as distinct from satisfactory conduct based on submission to discipline and assent to a confession of faith) came "not from Plymouth to Massachusetts as initially supposed, nor from England or Holland as presently assumed, but that it originated among the non separating-Puritans there" and spread from Massachusetts to other American colonies and thence back to England. The Separatist emphasis on discipline, which Professor Morgan stresses, links them more closely than has sometimes been recognized with the left wing of the Continental Reformation. The elaboration of the various stages by which saving faith can be recognized was the work of men like Perkins, Hildersham and Ames, whose writings shaped the views of the great wave of

Puritan emigrants in the 1630s. The insistence that candidates for membership give an account to the church of the work of God in their hearts and submit to questioning about it passed back to English Nonconformity, Professor Morgan argues, in the writings of Cotton, Hooker and Norton. He shows how the famous "Halfway Covenant" was necessary in New England in order to allow for the maintenance of infant baptism. But by the beginning of the 18th century many New England Puritans had had to repudiate not a few of the restrictions on church membership adopted in the 1630s. They were back in many ways to the outlook and practice of the original Separatist churches in London and Norwich.

This is an important thesis which deserves careful study by English scholars. It has more than antiquarian interest, for we are faced today with the necessity of reconsidering our doctrine of the church and deciding how potential church members should be sought, sifted and nurtured.

Professor Craven's book is based on the 1955 Stokes lectures and is an essay in historiography. He traces the changing attitudes of Americans to their own history and, in particular, the part played by varied interpretations of the beliefs and motives of the Pilgrim Fathers and their immediate successors and the relation thereto of the leaders of the American Revolution. This is a salutary study, which makes one wish for a similar examination of the "legends" on which many of our denominational claims are based. It is interesting to discover that the first American biographical dictionary contained no entry on Roger Williams and that only gradually did he establish his present dominating position in the American tradition.

ERNEST A. PAYNE

*Servants of God: A History of the Baptists of Cefyn Mawr and District*, by G. Vernon Price. (Bound Typescript.) 1965. 458 pp.

This book, a copy of which has been deposited in the Angus Library, Regent's Park College, and in the library at Baptist Church House, has obviously been produced as a labour of love by its author. His affection for the churches and the district of which he writes is evident on every page. Furthermore his work represents a rare venture in the field of Baptist local historiography since it is concerned not with one congregation but with the story of a group. The care which has gone into the preparation is evident not only in references to source materials used but in the helpful and generous index of names provided. The treatment is straightforward, the several congregations are taken in turn and the history of each one is brought down from the earliest times to the present.

All in all it is quite certain that Mr. Price's book would provide both a foundation and an encouragement for further studies of the life and witness of these Denbighshire congregations. These studies could delve more deeply into the local manuscript records and describe more fully a number of fascinating topics touched on in Mr. Price's pages. For example, the impact of Sandemanianism requires detailed treatment; so does the early history of what was Llangollen College and is now Bangor; the study of comparative statistics over the years could be carried further. Meanwhile the rise and fall of the various subsidiary organisations which were spawned by these chapels could be charted, relations with other groups call for treatment and some critical estimate of the reasons, especially the local reasons, for their decline needs to be attempted.

We should all be encouraged by a piece of work like this to undertake, for the present generation, a series of the local congregational histories that are so greatly needed.

B. R. WHITE

*Religious Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (ed.) H. D. Lewis. Cambridge University Press, 1965, 30s. (Annual Subscription price 50s.)

There come times in the history of thought when theology and philosophy wash their hands of each other. This happened as far as theology was concerned in the case of Albrecht Ritschl with his 'value-judgments' and his insistence that theology must avoid all contact with philosophy. It has happened in our own time from both sides. Karl Barth warned us that theology must not be put in the framework of a philosophy of religion or metaphysics, because to do this would mean not taking the idea of revelation seriously. From the other side the logical positivists, with their claim that there are only two classes of reliable assertion, logical statements (which really say nothing) and those statements which can be verified (in principle, at least) by sense-experience, made it clear that from their point of view theological statements are not meaningful. They are 'non-sense'.

There has been, however, what one writer in this new journal refers to as 'a broadening and a mellowing . . . in all the varied strands of contemporary empiricism.' Even so, theologians and philosophers still tend to fight shy of each other. But there are also those who feel that the right approach from the side of theology is to accept the salutary discipline which linguistic analysis would impose upon our thinking and its expression, without committing ourselves to the cramping 'veto' of that school. There are among philosophers, too, those who are convinced that we have emerged, or are emerging, into a post-positivist period where respectful hearing should be given to theologians who claim that religious assertions can have meaning.

All this has brought about what Dr. Hywel D. Lewis, the editor of this journal, calls 'a new insight into the nature of religion and the way its problems should be handled.' Those who know Professor Lewis' standpoint, particularly as expressed in his *Our Experience of God* will know that the policy of the journal will be to encourage a sympathetic handling of the big themes. The team of writers assembled for this first issue is impressive indeed. It includes names like H. H. Price (Belief 'In' and Belief 'That'), A. C. Ewing (Two 'Proofs' of God's Existence), Ninian Smart (Interpretation and Mystical Experience), and J. Heywood Thomas (Religious Language as Symbolism).

It would be invidious and misleading to compare this journal with any other, current or defunct. It is 'tailor-made' for the thought-situation in which we find ourselves. Its appearing now is, without question, a major event.

J. ITHEL JONES

*The Roots of Experience*, by Robert C. Walton. London. Student Christian Movement, 1965. 128 pp. 9s. 6d.

Within the compass of Religious Book Club requirements Mr. Walton offers, in a style both delightfully lucid and richly illustrated, a stimulating essay in metaphysics. He examines the diverse territories of physics, historiography and religion, and discovers that they share the common ground of "experience"; each discipline interprets this according to its own "pre-rational judgment", and sees it as evidential of pattern. The argument then moves, through consideration of Evolution and Biblical History, to the concept of universal pattern, a "within" which tends to break through at certain points of the "without". (Here indebtedness to de Chardin is acknowledged.) This pattern is to be understood as God's action in "things as they are", but it calls also for man's activity. "The pattern of evolution is in our hands" (p. 110). We have the choice of standing within or without the divine pattern.

Inevitably in the course of so brief a treatment questions are raised which call for more extended discussion than the author can pause to accord them. A certain epistemological position is taken up without apology. The importance of the unlikeness of religious experience to other types is only lightly touched upon. Theological symbolics, which would have yielded immediate profit for the argument, are not mentioned. We should like to hear more of what "reconciliation" means at the deepest personal level. Perhaps however we ought to find these things more piquant than disappointing.

The felicitousness of the prose falters only once or twice: we have the unfortunate diction "a host of unsuspected doors" on p. 25 and on p. 34 "phenomena . . . unobservable in principle".

On p. 52, 1.2 for " of " read " for ", and on p. 73, 1.24, for " third " read " second ".

Readers will be grateful for this sparkling and erudite excursion into the borderlands of knowledge.

S. J. DEWHURST

*Professional Education for Social Work in Britain*, by Marjorie J. Smith. London. George Allen and Unwin. 1965. 114 pp. 18s.

This essay was first published in pamphlet form in 1953 and offers an interesting historical account of the early development of professional education for social work in this country. Beginning with a co-operative scheme of training through lectures and practical work established in 1896 the late Professor Smith of the British Columbia School of Social Work goes on to describe the contribution of the Charity Organisation Society in urging the founding of a professional school of social work at university level. As Professor Richard Titmuss points out in his introduction, the London School of Economics later proposed to the COS that it should take over the educational functions of the London School of Sociology in relation to the education of social workers. This study includes as appendices papers on training read to the Council of the COS nearly 70 years ago by Mrs. Dunn Gardner and Helen Bosanquet.

There is also a paper on economic teaching at the university in relation to public wellbeing presented by Professor A. Marshall at a conference of the Committee on Social Work of the COS in 1902 and also extractions from the confidential report of this Committee submitted in 1903 setting out the syllabus for a proposed two-year course with suggestions for practical training.

Now that social work has largely become recognised as a profession with specialised basic preparation courses at most universities and has a number of respected professional bodies, students of society will today welcome this account of a crucial chapter in its development.

J. HOUGH

### OUR CONTRIBUTORS

M. J. WALKER, B.D., M.Th.,  
Minister, Edinburgh.

W. D. HUDSON, M.A., B.D., Ph.D.,  
Lecturer in Philosophy, University of Exeter.

T. FLEMING.  
Member, Dublin Street Baptist Church, Edinburgh.

Reviews by : S. J. DEWHURST, J. HOUGH, J. ITHEL JONES, E. A. PAYNE, D. S. RUSSELL, B. R. WHITE.