

Reviews

The Jerusalem Bible. London. Darton, Longman and Todd.
Pp. 2047. 84s.

This is a day of Bibles. New versions are appearing on all sides, and are seemingly finding a ready sale. We should be glad, for, as someone has said, the Gospel follows the Bible as the singing birds follow the dawn. The latest version is *The Jerusalem Bible*, a Roman Catholic edition in one volume, based upon the French *La Bible de Jérusalem*, published in 1956 under the auspices of the Dominical Biblical School in Jerusalem. The General Editor (Alexander Jones, L.S., S.T.L., I.C.B.)—who has been assisted by a distinguished band of collaborators—explains that while the Introductions and Notes (revised as necessary) are a direct translation from the French, the English text has been made, for the most part, direct from the Hebrew and Greek originals. (In a few instances, the Dead Sea Scrolls have assisted this process.) The modern historical methods have been used to good effect, and readers will find much valuable material in the introductions and notes, many of which are admirably done.

The translators have come down frankly on the side of “contemporary English”, even to the extent of abandoning the use of the second person singular in addressing the Deity, and of adopting the term “Yahweh” instead of “The Lord”. These decisions will be deplored by many lovers of the Authorised Version, who are not likely to react favourably to the opening sentence of Psalm xxiii: “Yahweh is my shepherd, I lack nothing.” The rendering of other passages also is not always happy, e.g. *I Cor.* vii. 2: “Since sex is always a danger”; and *Job* xxxi. 35: “I have had my say from A to Z.” But it would be difficult to improve on such a passage as *Mark* xv. 1: “First thing in the morning, the chief priests together with the elders and scribes, in short the whole Sanhedrin, had their plan ready.”

A notable feature of the work is its freedom from denominational bias. A Protestant might be excused if he approached with caution a version of the Bible bearing the Catholic *imprimatur*. So far as my investigations have gone, however, I have found little in the way of translation or comment to take exception to, even though I might not agree with the views expressed. Among the more debatable points, for instance, are the following:

Luke i. 34: The commentator thinks that Mary’s reply, “I am a virgin”, “perhaps expresses also her intention to remain so”.

I Cor. vii. 1 : The commentator concludes from St. Paul's words that "Virginity is a higher calling than marriage, and spiritually more profitable".

On the other hand, the crucial passage in Matt. xvi. 18ff, carries the following very balanced comment :

"Catholic exegetes maintain that these enduring promises hold good not only for Peter himself but also for Peter's successors. This inference, not explicitly drawn in the text, is considered legitimate because Jesus plainly intends to provide for his Church's future by establishing a régime that will not collapse with Peter's death."

Many of the Notes are written with a brevity and lucidity which make them models of their kind. I think the following worthy of special mention :

- Justification by Faith (Rom. i. 16. Cf. also the note on Faith and Works in Jas. ii. 14ff).
- The Divinity of Christ (Rom. ix. 5).
- Prayer (Rom. viii. 27).
- Grace (Rom. iii. 24).
- The Suffering Servant (Isaiah xlii).
- Individual responsibility (Ezek. xiv. 12).
- The Saints (Acts ix. 13).

The text is arranged in paragraphs, each with its own heading. This makes for clarity in reading, but gives at times an impression of scrappiness and must have added appreciably to the bulk of the volume. It has also necessitated a rather cramped arrangement of verse-numbers. The notes are arranged at the bottom of the right-hand page; they would have been even more helpful if a cross-reference had been given from the note to the text, as well as vice-versa. The work ends with a number of excellent supplements—Tables of Measures, etc., Index of Biblical Themes, Maps, and a very full Chronological Table. The book has been well printed and bound by the firm of Desclée et Cie, of Tournai, who are to be congratulated on their work. In so large and detailed a book as this the number of errors seems to me surprisingly small. I list such as I have discovered so that they may be corrected in the next edition.

In conclusion, I should like to quote a brief conversation which, I am told, took place some time ago between the Rev. Edwin Robertson and the abbot of a Catholic monastery which he was visiting in South America (I hope I have my facts right!). Mr. Robertson said to the abbot : "What a difference it will make to

Roman Catholics when they begin to study the Bible!" "Yes, indeed", replied the abbot: "And what a difference it will make to Protestants, too, when *they* begin to study the Bible!"

ERRATA

Gn. iii. 7 (note b); Num. vi. (note a); xii. 14; Dt. i. 7; iv (note a); Ps. Intro. (p. 785, line 19); Ws. v. 20; Si. xlviii. 10; Is. xxxiv. 6, xli. (note k), xlii (note a); liii. 2; Ezk. xiv. 20; Lk. ii. (note b); Rm. iii. (note a), x. 5 (mg.); Intro. p. 253 (bottom).

R. L. CHILD

The Great Rebellion, by Ivan Roots. London. Batsford. 1966. Pp. 326 (including references, bibliography and index). 45s.

This volume is the latest addition to Batsford's impressive Fabric of British History series. The period with which it deals (1642-1660) will have very considerable interest for many readers of THE BAPTIST QUARTERLY since it embraces the formative years of the English Baptist tradition. However, the study of these years has attracted so many researchers recently, and widely canvassed problems of interpretation present so many unanswered questions, and final conclusions as yet seem so far to seek, that almost any general history of the period must be regarded more as an interim report than as a definitive study.

Nevertheless, by choosing to provide a narrative largely concerned with political and constitutional developments, Dr. Roots has avoided committing himself to any of the more violently partisan solutions now on offer. At the same time he has provided a story which is normally both accurate and readable, even rather racy in style, which for once treats the Civil War and the Interregnum within one pair of covers. Whilst his exposition of motives and opinions is illustrated by a generous supply of opposite quotations, some of which are the more valuable for being unfamiliar, Dr. Roots has himself a gift for the telling, almost aphoristic, phrase. For example, in describing the dealings of Charles II's government with its former foes he justly comments (p. 261), "There was only a smear of blood at the Restoration, but a whole streak of meanness". It is also useful to have here a rather more generous interpretation of the abilities of one of the comparatively minor characters in the story, Richard Cromwell: the picture is of a man of rather more than ordinary ability faced, rather abruptly, with an impossible inheritance.

On the other hand this book does have a rather dated air about it for a new work. When economic and religious factors (the various sects never come into clear focus and, for example, the Fifth Monarchists seem to have influenced Oliver Cromwell's peace of mind quite as much as the abortive Royalist plottings) remain on the periphery of the story some of the depth and colour which we

have come to expect are quickly felt to be missing. It may well be, however, that this is the fault less of the author than the general situation of historical scholarship in the period at the present time. Yet this is an attractive and useful book.

One quotation will bear pondering by evangelicals and ecclesiastics alike (p. 256): "in history there are no full restorations . . . The civil wars, the Commonwealth, the Protectorate, the anarchy had all happened. They could not be simply forgotten".

B. R. WHITE

Richard Baxter, by G. F. Nuttall. Nelson. 1966. Pp. viii + 142. 35s.

For more than 20 years, Dr. Nuttall has been engaged in research on the publications and correspondence of Richard Baxter (1615-91). He has now added to his previous publications a biography, almost every page of which contains quotations and footnotes documenting this research. Baxter speaks for himself, in themes carefully selected by the author, and he stands out as a man of spiritual quality who sought consistently to promote Christian unity in the 17th century, when the church was being divided. But he was not prepared to subordinate truth to unity.

In an age when clergy and parishioners were notoriously lax, Richard Baxter, the Reformed Pastor, stands out as a Puritan minister who took his calling seriously. Ordained by the Bishop of Worcester at the age of 23, he exercised a ministry at Dudley, and at Bridgnorth, where he found people "hardened in unprofitableness". He came to Kidderminster to "a people that never had any awakening ministry before". He admitted to a fervent desire of winning souls, but no inclination to a pastoral ministry (p. 27). As the closing chapter of the book illustrates, Baxter was a student and a writer. Nevertheless, like Calvin, he was constrained to leave the life of the study for exacting pastoral work, in which situation his writings were hammered out. Nuttall fully illustrates Baxter as a pastor facing practical situations. His attitude to the Lord's Supper (p. 53), and his concern that his people should be spiritually fit to take communion, led him to devote the major part of his time to pastoral visitation. "This personal conference with every one about the state of their souls, together with catechisms, yielded me more comfort in the practice of it." (p. 57).

The problem of indiscriminate infant baptism worried him (pp. 55, 65) but he concluded, after careful reflection, that "the Anabaptist practice of leaving infants unbaptised is injurious to infants, and against the will of God". There are frequent references to the Baptists (pp. 27/8, 35/6, 38, 59). These pages reveal his disagreement with them as sectarians, but Nuttall points out "it was indeed fortunate for him that in John Tombes of Bewdley he had an opponent worthy of him, reputed to be the most learned and able Anabaptist in England". Both were ejected in 1662.

Chapter IV makes rewarding study. Suspicious of sectarianism, Baxter had a broad love for those with whom he disagreed. Like Bunyan, he did not regard differences about baptism as a barrier to fellowship. "It is a dishonourable doctrine against God and Christianity to say God layeth so much on a ceremony", i.e. baptism (p. 66). Abhorring the evil of dissension, he set himself to the "healing of our divisions", and brought together 72 ministers of various denominations in the Worcestershire Association. He describes them: "three independents, one Baptist, three or four of the old Episcopacy, and all the rest (of us) were mere Catholics, men of no faction, nor siding with any party, but owning that which is good in all, as far as they can discern it . . . desiring union and loving that which is good in all." Baxter acted as correspondent for this Worcestershire group, with comparable groups in England and the Continent. Nuttall illustrates Baxter's Catholicity by a quotation from Thomas Ewens of Broadmead, Bristol (p. 83).

But Baxter was no sentimentalist about Christian unity. At the Restoration he declined the offer of the bishopric of Hereford "because it will very much disable me from an effectual promoting of the Church's peace" (p. 88). His unsuccessful attempt at the Savoy conference to achieve a comprehensive church is but briefly related and discussed by Nuttall (pp. 88/90). But what is made clear is that Baxter became a Non-Conformist because he felt that the Act of Uniformity was a denial of true unity, and before 24th August, 1662, he made his position clear (p. 92).

The basis for unity he held to be Scripture and the Apostles' Creed. "We shall never have done with the Papists if we let the Scripture sufficiency alone" (p. 122). When Baxter applied for a licence as a Preacher, he said: "My religion is merely Christian, but as rejecting the Papal Monarchy, I am Protestant." He was licensed as a "Non-Conformist"—not by any denominational label.

The chapter on Baxter as a writer is followed by an appendix listing his 141 works. Nuttall links Baxter with liberal Non-conformity, indicating his influence on John Locke and Joseph Priestley, and the attempt to relate Scripture and Reason. There are references to his interest in the occult.

The book, with its wealth of quotation from Baxter, reveals the devoted pastor, the apostle of Christian unity, who suffered at the hands of those whom he would fain have embraced as brethren, and the saint whose vision was of the world to come. The closing quotation is: "My Lord, I have nothing to do in this World, but to seek and serve thee; I have nothing to do with a Heart and its affections, but to breathe after thee; I have nothing to do with my Tongue and Pen, but to speak to thee, and for thee, and to publish thy Glory, and thy Will."

Essays in Modern English Church History, in memory of Norman Sykes. Edited by G. V. Bennett and J. D. Walsh, London. A. & C. Black. 1966. Pp. 227. 35s.

This book consists of nine essays written by a group of Sykes's friends, themselves university teachers of standing. Though inevitably the essays vary in interest and quality, the volume as a whole is a not unworthy tribute to a distinguished scholar. Testimony is borne to Sykes's worth, both as a man and as a church historian, in a brief though valuable preface contributed by G. V. Bennett. A select list of his books, articles and principal reviews is also included.

These essays cover a wide range of subjects and a long period of time, starting with T. M. Parker on More's *Utopia*, and H. C. Porter on John Colet, and ending with Gordon Rupp's very readable "re-consideration" of R. W. Dixon, "one of the last of the amateur historians", who died in 1900. It is interesting to note that though Dixon was a "thorough Church of England man", his father was a well-known Methodist minister.

Obviously some essays will have little appeal to the average reader of *THE BAPTIST QUARTERLY* unless he is himself engaged in specialist studies upon which they have a bearing. Such essays, however, are none the worse for that. Indeed, it is fitting that contributions such as those on Anthony Marten and the Elizabethan debate on Episcopacy (by Cargill Thompson), William III and the Episcopate (by G. V. Bennett), and Warburton's *Alliance* (by R. W. Greaves) should be included in a memorial volume to Norman Sykes.

More likely to interest readers of this journal are those by G. R. Cragg on "The Collapse of Militant Puritanism", J. D. Walsh on "The Origins of the Evangelical Revival", and J. H. S. Kent on "Hugh Price Hughes and the Non-conformist Conscience". The first, a careful appraisal of the reasons for the strange disintegration of Puritan power after Oliver Cromwell's death, shows how lack of vigorous and imaginative leadership combined with disagreement, discontent and ambition, in the army, in the religious and political spheres, and in the community at large, led to the collapse of the régime.

Walsh's essay, which is to be commended both for its careful historical judgments and for the quality of its insights, provides an effective answer to the popular misunderstanding of the Evangelical movement within the Church of England as an offshoot of the Methodist revival. Walsh offers what he modestly calls a "few tentative suggestions" as to the influences underlying the movement and which, it is hoped, he will in due course work out in greater detail.

Dr. Kent is an able and forceful writer. It is the more to be regretted, therefore, that he should commit himself to a number of

sweeping and quite misleading generalisations about the Non conformist Conscience. Indeed, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that he is writing with an axe to grind. Certainly, his essay lacks that objectivity of approach which is to be expected of a serious historian. Having said this, however, it would not be right to end on a critical note, for the volume, considered in its entirety, makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of English Church History.

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