

Reviews

Essays on Old Testament History and Religion, by Albrecht Alt.
Translated by R. A. Wilson. Oxford. Basil Blackwell. 1966. Pp.
x+274. 42s.

Many will be grateful for this translation of five essays on subjects of crucial importance for Old Testament study which have here been selected from a collection of Alt's many outstanding publications, not otherwise readily accessible, two volumes of which appeared in 1953 at the time of his seventieth birthday and a third in 1959, after his death, under the title of *Kleine Schriften zur Geschichte des Volkes Israel*. The first essay on "The God of the Fathers" traces the path which led from the "God of Abraham", the "Fear of Isaac", and the "Mighty One of Jacob" to the God of Israel in whose worship as Yahweh the Israelite tribes were united under Moses. In the second essay entitled "The Origins of Israelite Law" examination mainly of the Book of the Covenant points to the presence from the beginning of an unresolved tension between Canaanite casuistic law which was essentially conditional and entirely secular in character and the apodeictic law peculiar to Israel which although basically cultic aimed by a series of prohibitions to subject all areas of life to the unconditional will of Yahweh. "The Settlement of the Israelites in Palestine" is the subject of the third essay in which Alt considers the history of territorial divisions to demonstrate that by occupying the mountainous areas the Israelites were enabled gradually to adapt their semi-nomadic way of life to agricultural and urban conditions. The fourth essay on "The Formation of the Israelite State" shows this to have come about through Philistine pressure with Saul's founding of the kingdom of Israel and its subsequent territorial expansion under David and Solomon. The nature and function of the monarchy here discussed is further considered in the final and complementary essay on "The Monarchy in the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah" which is concerned also with the founding and significance of the Davidic dynasty. So necessarily brief an outline but inadequately conveys the value of these essays which lies in the penetrating scholarship of their author and in the very thorough use he made of form critical study, of archaeological material, and of historical and geographical knowledge in all of which he was an acknowledged master. Slips to be noted include Exod. xxi. 2-22, 16 for Exod. xxi. 2-xxii. 16 (p. 88 notes 15, 16), "prothesis" curiously for "protasis" (p. 89), and "supplanted" for "to supplant" (p. 251).

E. T. RYDER

Israel from the Earliest Times to the Birth of Christ, by Arvid S. Kapelrud. Translated by J. M. Moe. Oxford. B. H. Blackwell. 1966. Pp. vii + 152. 15s.

Recent years have seen the appearance of a number of important studies of the history of Israel, with the works of M. Noth and J. Bright becoming standard authorities. Neither book makes very easy reading for a beginner so that there is a real need for something smaller and more compact. Both W. F. Albright and E. L. Ehrlich have sought to fill this gap with concise histories of Israel. Now this excellent translation of Kapelrud's book adds another very useful tool to the Bible student's workshop.

Kapelrud has avoided discussion of alternative viewpoints to his own and, as far as possible, has presented a continuous story based upon the results of the most recent researches. His account reflects the extent to which detailed literary sources are available. Thus roughly half of the book is taken up with the period of the monarchy, and the Hellenistic period also is well covered, where the books of Maccabees and Josephus provide adequate data. The Patriarchal age and the Persian period are, correspondingly, more briefly dealt with. This has the advantage that the attention of the reader is concentrated upon positive information, rather than upon the theories of scholars. On the other hand the student could well benefit by a fuller notification of the problems that exist in regard to many of the most important aspects of Israelite history. One cannot have everything, however, and Kapelrud's book skilfully introduces an immense amount of scholarly knowledge into short compass.

Kapelrud's own judgment upon issues of contemporary debate can be discerned at many points. In the question of the history of the patriarchal traditions he is neither as sceptical as Noth, nor as optimistic as Bright. The value of archaeological research is fully accepted, and its results used with scholarly care. The translation is fluent, and the volume should provide a valuable textbook for short courses of Biblical study.

R. E. CLEMENTS

‡ *Some Fell on Good Ground. A History of the beginnings and development of the Baptist Church in New South Wales, Australia, 1831-1965*, by Alan C. Prior. Baptist Union of New South Wales, Sydney, 1966. Pp. 338, 13 illustrations. \$3.90. (Obtainable from Baptist Book Shop, 617 George Street, Sydney.)

This volume is part of the preparations for the centenary of the N.S.W. Baptist Union in 1968, and is an important contribution to the largely neglected field of Australian Baptist history. The author, a great-grandson of the first Baptist minister to migrate to Adelaide, is well known throughout Australia and beyond as a preacher, editor (1949-1961) of the weekly *Australian Baptist*, and a former vice-president of the Baptist World Alliance.

About one-third of the narrative is properly devoted to the history of the churches before 1868. The first recorded services were held in 1831, when most other denominations were well established. For Baptists the first years were full of struggles and disappointments. The main problems included lack of an educated or stable ministry (John Saunders being a notable exception), internal controversies over Calvinism and open or closed membership (transplanted from Britain), and excessive independency. Inadequate financial resources were aggravated by the refusal of Baptists to emulate most other denominations and accept Crown grants of land, although the site of the first church was an exception to this rule: and this provoked controversy. The first Baptists also resented what they thought to be lack of interest on the part of Baptists in the homeland.

The first effective association was formed in 1868 with only 11 churches and 359 members, and from 1870 this was expanded into the Baptist Union. The development of the denomination is carefully traced by Mr. Prior, and vivid accounts of several colourful pioneers are provided. There are separate chapters on Home Missions, Foreign Missions, Theological Education, Sunday Schools and Youth Work, and Social Services. One useful chapter of over fifty pages gives an outline-history of each church, although the Sydney churches should have been grouped together to avoid confusion for non-local readers, and the Balmain church, now extinct, is omitted without explanation. Today N.S.W. Baptists have 221 churches and over 17,000 members, are rapidly expanding, and no better introduction to their modern life than this book could be suggested.

Much scattered and inaccessible material has been gathered by the author, although the documentation is sometimes inadequate. It would have been more helpful had he listed his own sources rather than the general Baptist books given in his own bibliography. There are several misprints, and no account of the modern District Associations is given although these are referred to in the formation of eight churches.

This book will be authoritative for many years, and deserves the widest commendation to all interested in the development of Baptist witness in the Commonwealth. Readers are advised of two earlier volumes: B. S. Brown, *Members One of Another* (Melbourne, 1962), and A. C. Hill, *Still Thy Church Extend* (Adelaide, 1963), written for the respective centenaries of the Victorian and South Australian Baptist Unions.

K. R. MANLEY

Preachers, Pedagogues and Politicians, by Willard P. Gatewood, Jr.
The University of North Carolina Press, 1966. Pp. viii and 268.
48s.

This well documented work is a study of the course of the evolution controversy in North Carolina from 1920-1927. It is of particular

interest to Baptists because one of the chief figures in the controversy was William Louis Poteat, a biologist and the president of Wake Forest College, a Baptist institution of higher learning, who was described by H. L. Mencken as a "liaison officer between Baptist revelation and human progress".

It might be asked why a single state has been selected for a detailed study of the evolution controversy which broke out in a number of Southern States during the nineteen twenties. The reason for the choice is that North Carolina was regarded as a key-state by the anti-evolutionists. The failure of their attempt to get the teaching of evolution in public schools banned by law in the most intelligent of the Southern States had significant repercussions elsewhere.

Professor Gatewood analyses the cultural and social factors which lay behind much of the anti-evolutionary sentiment: the dislike of Germany (Poteat was suspect because he had studied there), the conflict between rural and urban culture, the fear that public morality was being undermined by the teaching of evolution. The author shows the close connection of the anti-evolution movement with revivalism. One of the strongest opponents of the teaching of evolution was Mordecai Ham, under whose preaching Billy Graham was converted. Many Baptists supported the crusade to get evolution prohibited by law, but some, while not accepting the theory of evolution, were convinced that ideas cannot be legislated out of existence.

What is of particular interest to the reviewer is the evidence in the book of the deformation of evangelicalism under the pressure of local cultural factors. There is on the one hand an unbounded faith in the efficacy of legislation to enforce morality, which ill accords with evangelicalism's emphasis on the new birth. On the other hand there is the assumption that North Carolina was a "Christian" state, the money of whose taxpayers should not be used for the support of anti-Christian (i.e. evolutionary) teaching in public schools. This again, particularly so far as Baptists are concerned, does not seem to square with their conversion theology. One would have wished that Professor Gatewood had been aware of the deformation of evangelicalism which is termed fundamentalism. A knowledge of the distinctions drawn by Carl F. H. Henry in his book *Evangelical Responsibility in Contemporary Theology* (pp. 46-47), between evangelicalism and fundamentalism would have helped the author to have produced a more perceptive analysis of the conflict he describes.

D. P. KINGDOM