

# THE TYNDALE FELLOWSHIP

## Sectional Notes

### Summer Activities at Tyndale House

Members are asked to note the altered dates of this year's activities:

27th June - 1st July: Old Testament Study Group. Host: Dr. W. J. Martin. Main Subject: The Book of Jeremiah.

1st - 5th July: Biblical Theology Study Group. Chairman: The Rev. Dr. D. M. Lloyd-Jones. Subject: The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

10th - 13th July: New Testament Study Group. Chairman: Professor F. F. Bruce. Subject: The Corinthian Correspondence.

### Courses in Biblical Hebrew

Dr. W. J. Martin, assisted by Mr. K. A. Kitchen, will conduct courses in Hebrew for students of all levels (including complete beginners) from 23rd to 28th September at Tyndale House. Details may be obtained from the Secretary, Tyndale House, Selwyn Gardens, Cambridge.

### Friends of Tyndale House

The annual meeting of the Friends of Tyndale House will be held on Saturday, 29th June at 3-15 p.m. Dr. D. R. Denman will give a report on the year's work, and Dr. W. J. Martin will give the address.

### Tyndale Lectures 1957

27th June: The Biblical Archaeology Lecture: The Joseph Narratives and Egyptian Sources, by Mr. K. A. Kitchen.

29th June: The Inaugural Historical Theology Lecture: Henry Ryder, the first Evangelical Bishop, by the Rev. Professor G. C. B. Davies.

1st July: The Biblical Theology Lecture: The Intercession of the Spirit, by the Rev. Professor Gwyn Walters.

10th July: The New Testament Lecture: Social Obligation in the New Testament, by Mr. E. A. Judge.

### Winter Study Groups

17th - 20th December, at Tyndale House: The Church History Study Group.

17th - 18th December, at Westminster Chapel: The Puritan Studies Group.

### The Late Dr. W. F. Arndt

We announce with regret the sudden passing of Dr. William Frederick Arndt, in his seventy-seventh year. Dr. Arndt was for many years on the staff of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, and had been resident at Tyndale House since October last. He was spared long enough to see the publication in January of this year of the great *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, edited by him in collaboration with Dr. W. F. Gingrich on the basis of Walter Bauer's *Wörterbuch*, a working tool which all students of the Greek Testament will value.

## Studies in Biblical Interpretation—II

We have interrupted the series of historical studies in this section to draw attention to the recently published series of Riddell Lectures of the University of Durham: *The Limits of Literary Criticism: reflections on the interpretation of poetry and Scripture*, by Helen Gardner (Oxford University Press, 64pp., 5s.).

Miss Gardner is well known as a literary critic and as an editor of Donne, and her comments on the relation between developments in the discipline in which she is celebrated and in biblical studies cause one furiously to think on almost every page. She is well read in theological literature, and the illustrations which she adduces from the literary field (one of the most apt is, incidentally, from James Thurber) are always illuminating.

To avoid misunderstanding, we must make a distinction which Miss Gardner does not clearly draw. For her, literary criticism is concerned with interpretation and evaluation: whereas in the field of biblical studies the critic is formally assigned the humbler concerns of authorship, date, sources, and so on.

The first lecture is, startlingly enough, entitled 'The Drunkenness of Noah'. Some nineteenth-century writers, with their bland assurance that the historical sense of Scripture was easy to find, and their detestation of 'hidden senses', are studied, culminating in Dean Farrar's holy hatred of the 'shocking' interpretation of Noah's drunkenness as a pre-

figurement of the Passion. Now the curious thing is, as Miss Gardner shows, that this common theme of mediæval art and exegesis, so repellent to the Victorian mind, is strangely attractive to the modern. Even a writer like Simone Weil, without betraying any knowledge of its mediæval use, offers a perverted version of it. Literary criticism has changed. The older type of analysis, prolific in theories of composite authorship and literary strata, has been largely discarded. The modern principle is 'Make sense of what you have', the explication of literary wholes: and the modern mind does not rebel against riddles and dark sayings. Aided by the psychologists, anthropologists and philosophers, non-Christian as well as Christian sees everywhere patterns of archetypal myth.

One effect on biblical studies is surveyed in the second lecture, 'The Poetry of St. Mark', where Miss Gardner gives a brilliant critique of a school of New Testament scholars associated with her own University. In Dr. Austin Farrer she finds a welcome desire to 'make sense of what you have', as a literary whole rather than as an amalgam of diverse elements; but she finds in him a fatal weakness which he shares with many an interpretative literary critic in another field: the search for patterns produces patterns but they are curiously like what the searcher is finding everywhere. What they reveal supremely is the mind of the interpreter. 'It is surely an odd phrase to speak of St. Mark's imagination being "controlled" by facts. If we believe that what he is recording *are* facts — and that is the crux of the matter between Christian and non-Christian — then it is surely illed by the wonder of those facts, and not merely respectful to them.'

The final lecture, 'The Historical Sense', takes up the parable with regard to general literary criticism. The greatest period of our literature has been the happiest hunting ground for those who seek for 'patterns of thought' and 'climates of ideas'. Shakespeare is treated as a profound theologian setting forth (in *Measure for Measure*!) the drama of human redemption with an intricacy of allusion which would not bemuse his original audiences, who were, it is alleged, wedded to the conception of hidden senses in Scripture. But for those who lived in it, the early seventeenth century was no 'Golden Age of the Mind', but a time of crisis and agony — and a time when all did not think alike. Moreover, Miss Gardner argues, the flowering of English literature was not unconnected

with Protestant insistence on the reading of the whole Bible and on the primacy of the literal sense.

By way of illustration Miss Gardner turns to a great 'metaphysical', whom one would expect to revel in this game of hidden senses. But Donne does nothing of the kind. For him the literal sense is 'the principal intention of the Holy Ghost, in that place'; and, though he recognizes that 'his principall intention in many places, is to expresse things by allegories' so that 'a figurative sense is the littoral sense' his whole stress is on the plain meaning of the saving text. 'We are avoiding [metaphysical poetry's] true seriousness and finding seriousness in its levity, if we concentrate upon the imagination's power to perceive analogies and neglect its primary power to apprehend and express what touches the mind and heart.'

This leads on to a distinction between typology and allegory, since the former is rooted in the historical actuality of both the type and its realization, and could thus never be reduced to mere symbol; and to the conclusion that literary criticism must begin by acknowledging its own limitations. All his analysis and information can defeat the interpreter's true end, 'if he does not realize that, after a certain point, silence may well be the best service he can render his author and his reader'.

Miss Gardner will not always command agreement: for instance her remarks on Old and New Testament eschatology might be hard to sustain in more extended form: but she has provided an essay which is profound, suggestive and most pleasurably written.

A. F. WALLS.

## Book Reviews

### The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth

By G. C. Berkouwer. *Paternoster Press*. 18s.

It takes a big man to make big mistakes; and when he does make them, you can learn more from them than from the virtuous orthodoxy of twenty dull dogs. A thinker's stature is known by the worth of his mistakes. It is a mark of Karl Barth's greatness that, right or wrong, he thinks, and makes others think; and, after all, to think heretically is less un-Christian than not to think at all. For sheer weight of learning and ability Barth is a modern Origen — nothing less, And