

## Book Reviews

### THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF CREATION AND REDEMPTION.

By *Emil Brunner*. pp. 386. Lutterworth Press. 25/-.

This is the second of three projected volumes of Brunner's Dogmatics, and covers the doctrines of creation, man, providence, atonement and incarnation. It will be obvious from this list that the volume before us has much ground in common with the author's earlier books, *The Mediator*, *Man in Revolt*, and *Revelation and Reason*. But even in covering this ground Brunner gives us no mere rehash of stale material and he enlivens his work with numerous comments on current theological trends, especially on the writings of Karl Barth. He also has some brief but useful comments on Bultmann's efforts at demythologising the New Testament. Briefly, his contention is that Bultmann has confused under the heading of myth two radically different and independent matters. There are, on the one hand, such matters of fact as that the earth is not flat (as the Biblical writers thought) but a ball. There is also the quite different "question of the interpretation of History and the Nature and action of God". This "has nothing to do with natural science". It is one thing to "compare the statements of the New Testament with scientific truths which in so far as they are real truths . . . are absolutely final for us". It is quite another thing to "contrast the statements of the New Testament with the thinking of 'modern man'" (p. 265).

But what gives this book its distinctiveness is that the field is seen as a whole and seen from a distinctive standpoint. Brunner sees faith as a personal encounter with the living Christ, and distinguishes it sharply from passive acceptance of "revealed truth". From this viewpoint the dogmatic theologian appears as the servant of the personal encounter of faith. His work must be related to it at every point, though he must never attempt to provide it with its object. It is this standpoint which links together the different doctrines. The doctrine of creation, for example, must not be seen as a speculative idea, but it comes to man as a personal summons. "I am the Lord, thy creator" makes me directly responsible, for it means, "Thou art my property" (pp. 8-9). In the same way what the New Testament says about the Incarnation is not to be regarded as an isolated doctrine but always is immediately related to the "salvation given us in Him. . . . Christological doctrine in the narrower sense, this doctrine of the Person of Jesus is also 'truth as encounter'" (p. 350). It is to this idea of truth as encounter that our author brings us back again and again. Most theologians to-day outside the Roman Catholic Church would agree with him in his assumption that revelation is not primarily propositional but personal. But there are few, if any, who have made so consistent an attempt as Brunner to see what kind of a picture this view of revelation gives of Christian doctrine as a whole.

But his conclusions are not always as acceptable as his standpoint,

nor do they always appear to be dictated by it. In dealing with the Resurrection, for example, he adopts an ambiguous attitude to "the so-called Empty Tomb" (p. 367) refusing to commit himself either way. He regards the matter as unimportant on the ground that it was meeting with the Risen Lord, not the empty tomb, which created the Easter faith; that "the empty tomb is a world-fact which everyone, whether they believe in Christ or not, could have perceived" (p. 368). Further he argues that original testimony to the Risen Lord does not refer to the empty tomb. It may be granted that the empty tomb by itself would not have created the Easter faith. But if the tomb had not been empty, belief in the Resurrection would have been destroyed soon after its birth. Moreover, the earliest testimony implies the empty tomb when St. Paul contrasts what happened on the third day with the statement that Christ was not only dead but also buried (1 Cor. xv. 3-4). Brunner's views on the Virgin Birth, as is well known, are far more emphatically negative.

But these two matters are singled out because they are exceptional rather than typical. The book as a whole is a constructive, clear and vigorous presentation of the central doctrines of the Christian faith. It is of value not only to the theologian but also to the preacher because it relates everything to the personal encounter of faith. Once again we are indebted to Miss Olive Wyon for an eminently readable translation.

W. M. F. SCOTT.

## PAUL

*By Martin Dibelius. Longmans. 7/6.*

This biography of St. Paul was begun by Dr. Dibelius of Heidelberg, but as he died after writing a little over six chapters it has been edited by his former pupil, Dr. Werner Georg Kummel, Professor of New Testament at Marburg, who has amplified the existing notes and brought the number of chapters up to ten.

The work has not the sparkle of T. R. Glover's study of the apostle, or even of A. D. Nock's book ("they cheerfully went after the red herring"—Acts 23. 7), though the picture is concise and clear. The subject-matter is treated from the genetic point of view, and the result is stimulating. The main sources used consist of the Pauline corpus, except the Pastoral Epistles and Ephesians, supplemented by the Acts. As a young man Paul was in Jerusalem for rabbinical higher education, but he was not a fully trained rabbinical scholar, an ordained judge. And he was a bachelor, not a widower. Much in him is to be explained by his conversion: his sternness and gentleness, the heights and depths, exist in him side by side. His emotional language, his excitable thoughts and feelings are due to a highly sensitive nervous constitution. He was sensitive, we should note, not mercurial. "His whole being lacks unity, poise and harmony; and his thought is therefore without system in its form, and without humanism in its content." And yet he shows a passionate single-mindedness. "Paul had to take up a position"—not a "cautiously balanced neutrality". Hence he became first a persecutor and then the man who counted everything loss because of the superlative worth of knowing Christ.

St. Paul's conversion, which rent his life in two, was not so much

from sin to righteousness or from a false God to the true God, as from a religion of righteousness to the religion of the sinner, from a wrong way of honouring God to a right way. It came about, humanly speaking, because he was the first to recognize that the Jewish and Christian conceptions of God were incompatible : if the Christians, despised outcasts as they were, should prove to be right, then God is different from what the Jews believed ; if the Messiah had actually come to the *am haaretz*, as the ecclesiastical highbrows called them, if to Jews on the fringe of or outside of the Law, then why not for the Gentiles also ? The link between the historical Jesus, whom Paul probably never saw, and the apostle, is furnished by the church, " the collection of people . . . (which) was the result of the life's work of Jesus ", a people led to God not by pious deeds but by divine grace.

And so Paul was converted, and we must not make it " evaporate into something pathological ". From this starting point come the basic ideas of Paul's gospel : apart from varied emphases, the letters (which belong to the last fifteen years of his life, anyway, when any essential change in his philosophy would hardly take place) do not reveal any substantial development. But with the conversion came a further shock : " with the best will in the world to serve God, one can pass him by ". Why did God let His people go astray so grievously ? For the answer Paul has to consider sin and salvation—and the righteousness of God, which is at stake. Hence his theology is a theodicy and his theological thought is combined with his missionary action.

Dr. Dibelius then traces the apostle's missionary work, which is first and foremost that of a preacher—a refreshing note this—and his witness and theology. He is not a mystic, for God and man face each other, but he uses the language of the mystic. Union with Christ is achieved not in mysticism or vision but in the dangers of the missionary, which has its challenge and rebuke to our practical age. In a final estimate of St. Paul's work we learn that he was an ambassador to the world, and the unifier of the Church. The first herald of the world wide Church, he kept it one. He put it on a firm intellectual foundation, God's salvation in Christ ; he kept the gospel from perversion by human " works " and human " piety ", and not only in his own day but through the centuries has exercised the critical function of turning men back to the Lord. In the day of the welfare state, and " salvation " when the next government comes in, the modern minister, bullied and cajoled by philosophers and economists, sociologists and the rest, could do worse than refresh his spirit by testing himself by St. Paul. And this book would give him a good start : no-one could say that it is behind the times.

There are some fine sentences worth pondering. " He is a poet, but on his knees ; he lifts his voice, but in God's presence. " " The ' righteous ' man of every kind is hopelessly discredited. " " Paul's view of mankind in the mass (his ' morbid concern over sin ') is not a hopeless one. . . . The world and its peoples do not now lie before Paul as a field of ruins, but rather as a cornfield. . . . " The weighing of evidence is careful and a certain individuality of interpretation is not without its value. Thus Dr. Dibelius holds that Ephesians is an

imitation of Colossians and therefore not a source of information about Paul's thought. This has some support from Goodspeed and Mitton, but Professor C. H. Dodd seems to be still unconvinced. Again, Dibelius holds that "the statements about the actual travelling (in Acts) can be taken as quite reliable"; W. L. Knox regarded them as a mere framework. Dibelius assigns a late date to the Acts; Bruce an early one. For our author, "Paul's speeches in Acts have very little biographical value"; Bruce, with others, would dissent. Dibelius seems to accept the statement that Paul was born at Tarsus; W. L. Knox takes the opposite view. In Tarsus, according to Dibelius, he had learnt a trade, but did not have the social status of a manual worker. Contrast with this the theory of Deissmann. "The stay in Macedonia was of only short duration, but rich in results." Knox is not so optimistic. And so on. Not everyone will agree that Paul "knew nothing" of the necessity of the death of Christ to God, though he used the ideas with which he was familiar, such as expiatory sacrifice. If we of to-day find this language foreign to us, it may be our mistake as it certainly is our loss. The present reviewer will never forget the testimony of two highly intelligent ladies, both of whom he knew, who were present at an animal sacrifice in the East. One of them felt pity for "the poor little goat"; the second immediately remembered that "without the shedding of blood there is no remission". But it may well be the case that the absence of uniformity in New Testament scholarship is a sign of its vitality. And it implies that the preacher of the Word of God is not bound hard and fast to the view of any scholar or group of scholars whose views are "right". For the oracles of God are still the medium through which the living God speaks to and through His contemporary prophets.

Finally, two defects ought to be mentioned. There is a misprint on page 19 in the spelling of "philosophy"; and, much more serious, ought not Christian teachers to avoid even the barest suggestion that the Spirit of God is an "it" (p. 44)?

RONALD A. WARD.

## THAT MAN PAUL.

*By Edward Carpenter. Longmans. 3/-.*

This book is less ambitious than that of Dr. Dibelius: it is shorter and is more of a popular study than an academic treatise. This is, perhaps, its chief value. T. R. Glover used to complain that Sophocles is regarded by some people as "something written in a book", and the same complaint might be made with regard to St. Paul. But here we see him, apostle though he was, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, living in an age not entirely dissimilar to our own. "It is the purpose of this short book to encourage us to catch something from St. Paul and to allow his own triumphant faith to flow into our own lives." Certainly he has his points of contact with us to-day: "the cast of St. Paul's mind was sufficiently practical to make him always suspicious of that which was unintelligible to ordinary people". And yet he did not fail to speak of the deep things of God.

Some striking sentences bring home to us something of the dynamic of the apostle. "He had a disconcerting habit of talking directly about

important things"; "he, equally with us, lived in an explosive world"; "into his letters he empties himself". Speaking of those who have had no "sudden conversion" because they have been brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, Canon Carpenter tells us that "there must have been a time when discipleship of Jesus passed from a climate into a conviction". One is grateful to him for this. But is it right to assert that in preaching the gospel immediately after his conversion "Paul undoubtedly over-reached himself"? Vividness is added to a vivid book by texts from translations by the Bishop of London and by J. B. Phillips. But, if Christ be not risen, are we not *more to be pitied* than all men—not "miserable"?

RONALD A. WARD.

### COMMUNION WITH GOD IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

*By A. R. George. The Fernley-Hartley Lecture, 1953.*

*Epworth, 1953. 25/-.*

This is an able book on an important subject. One of the features of Roman Catholicism that proves most attractive to many people is its highly developed system of piety and its carefully articulated ascetical theology. It is an important element in Roman propaganda to claim that only in the one Catholic Church will true Holiness be found. And, in truth, the "Catholic" ascetical system is very impressive, both in its thoroughness and in the heights of asceticism that it can evoke. Many converts have been won as a result of the impression made by the deep devotion of the "religious". Protestants are by no means convinced that this claim to unrivalled sanctity should be taken at its face value. To take one simple, but very relevant, matter: it is not evident that the predominantly "Catholic" areas of the world have produced a higher level of morality than the Protestant ones. It is clear, however, that these claims pose profound questions with regard to the nature of true holiness. What place is there for mystical experience, asceticism, the "religious life"? Is the great system of "Catholic" piety a proper development of primitive Christianity, or is it a perversion of it? Do its affinities with non-Christian mysticism show that a great measure of divine light has been bestowed upon the pagan world apart from a knowledge of the gospel? Or, do they show that paganism has invaded the Church? The only answer to these searching questions is to be found in a thorough study of the nature of true piety as revealed in our dominical and apostolic source-book. *Communion with God in the New Testament* is just such a study.

The author, who is Tutor in Systematic and Pastoral Theology and Philosophy of Religion at Wesley College, Headingley, seems to stand very much in the Vincent Taylor tradition. He has a good command both of the apparatus of New Testament scholarship and also a good knowledge of the broader theological field, with the result that his work is relevant as well as scholarly. In his introductory chapter he seeks to define mysticism and to classify the different approaches that have been made to it. He identifies three broad types of piety. Firstly, that which speaks of absorption in, or union with, the Transcendent Being, who is often not personally conceived. Secondly, that which

speaks of mutual indwelling. Thirdly, that which speaks of man's separation from God, and thinks rather of eschatological salvation than present communion. He then proceeds to examine in detail the relevant New Testament teaching. He gives particularly careful attention to the Synoptic Gospels, with valuable studies on Jesus as a Man of Prayer and on the Teaching of Jesus on Prayer. Then he surveys in turn the teaching of Acts, St. Paul, the Johannine Writings and the Rest of the New Testament, before coming to his concluding chapter.

Not surprisingly, he finds that the New Testament consistently conforms to his second type of piety. He realizes, of course, that his classification is a great over-simplification, and his study in fact brings out the richness and variety of New Testament language. In the course of the discussion, K. E. Kirk's *The Vision of God* comes in for severe criticism, and he argues that Kirk's stress on the "vision of God" as the predominant New Testament conception does not represent the true emphasis. He believes that "knowledge of God" or, even better, "communion with God" more truly represents the basic New Testament concept.

The meat of the book is to be found in the middle chapters, which is straight New Testament work, and it is here that the writer is at his best. But I have to confess that my interest was aroused by the opening chapter, which raises broader theological questions, and I was consequently disappointed that my appetite once whetted was by no means satisfied. I gained an impression that the author, though widely read, had an eclectic rather than a systematic theology. He has abundant references to modern writers—Methodist, Lutheran, Anglo-Catholic, Roman Catholic, Liberal, Dialectical and non-descript—but, perhaps significantly, I did not notice any reference to a classical Calvinist writer. No reference, for instance, to B. B. Warfield's two large volumes on "Perfectionism". Systematic theology has its dangers, but it is essential to coherence, and the Calvinist school has produced the systematic theologians *par excellence* of Protestantism. Had he been more deeply steeped in Reformed theology, I believe that the conclusions would have been more satisfying, and that even the fine New Testament work (e.g., in the treatment of the Atonement and in some points of criticism) would have benefited.

J. W. WENHAM.

#### A THEOLOGY OF SALVATION : A COMMENTARY ON ISAIAH 40-55.

*By Ulrich E. Simon. pp. 266. S.P.C.K. 25/-*

The title of this commentary is a sign of the changing emphasis in Old Testament studies, so long dominated by the literary-historical approach. Mr. Simon is well versed in such technicalities, and holds radical views on the dating of these chapters, but his main concern here is to expound the prophecy theologically. His method is to let the text govern the scheme of his book, so that the subjects it raises are discussed as they come into view, and the reader is given no choice (except by resort to the index) but to make the journey on foot, so to speak, with the prophet; exploring rather than viewing from afar the contours of this country, and joining in the long climb to the summit. A great many matters come up for discussion on the way, sometimes

interrupting the progress excessively, so that the sense of direction is obscured; but in general the scheme is justified, keeping the commentary in step with the Word while setting it out as a continuous exposition. The exception to this method is in the Hebrew notes, which are collected at the end of the book.

Mr. Simon holds, with C. C. Torrey, that the author of these chapters was a prophet ministering to a dispirited and dispersing Judaism at the close of the fifth century—that is, a hundred years and more after the rebuilding of the temple. This “extreme” view has the curious effect of bringing Mr. Simon closer, in some important respects, to those who believe in the unity of the book of Isaiah than to the upholders of the “moderate” critical view. He is clear of the maze of false trails that lead from the idea of the prophet as an exilic patriot in whom the career of Cyrus aroused extravagant hopes of the immediate future. Instead he sees him as a preacher (“perhaps the creator of what is technically known as a sermon”) who “points intentionally to the suffering Messiah and his atoning work as the crisis of God’s work among men”. Similarly, the “Comfort ye” which sets the tone of the prophecies does not, to our author, spring from the conviction that the Exile has by now inflicted more than enough punishment, but from the revelation that “only transcendent intervention from the sinless can dispose of sin”. The term “Servant of YHWH”, while it “covers a wide field and gathers up new meanings” in the course of the prophecy, is “the new formal title of the Messiah”. It is the Messiah accordingly who is portrayed in chapter liii (and here the commentary leads us step by step through the chapter in such a way as to make us encounter it as if for the first time). In the view of the commentary, the late dating of the work makes it “at least possible that the prophet witnessed the ritual of the Day of Atonement in Jerusalem”, and the author notes both the similarity of the teaching of this chapter to that of Lev. xvi (concerning not only expiation but the transference of guilt from the guilty party to the innocent) and also the new departure that it makes in setting forth atonement as “not a seasonal rite but an everlasting act of God”, with a unique victim who is both “priest-shepherd” and “victim-sheep”. “Substitution must be used in reconciliation, yet not animals must replace men but the Messiah must consciously embrace and put upon himself the sins of the people.” After resurrection “the Eved-Messiah crowns his kingship with intercessory priesthood”. Again, the call to depart from Babylon is interpreted not politically but typologically, symbolizing the second Exodus which is spiritual and messianic.

These chapters, then, are given their full theological and indeed Christological weight. At the same time the author, in cutting loose from the exilic theory, robs the allusions to Cyrus and the historical liberation from Babylon of a great part of their force. He would clearly be much happier if Cyrus could disappear from the text altogether (especially as he rejects the statement in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22—and its sequel in Ezra—that “the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus” to liberate the Jews), and he toys with Torrey’s expedients for excising the name, unconvincing though he finds them, before reluctantly resorting to typology for his explanation. If, however, we are willing

to attribute the prophecies to the authentic Isaiah, we at once recognize a well-established principle of prophecy whereby God reveals the distant future in terms of the nearer, and so provides not only a "type" but a specific message for the generation that embodies it. It is doubly purposeful typology. So, for example, our Lord chose to predict the last days in terms of the forthcoming siege of Jerusalem, to the special benefit of many who were called upon to live through that event.

There are, naturally, many points at which those who hold an orthodox view of inspiration will differ from Mr. Simon, and there are some examples of strained interpretation (e.g., on "with the rich in his death", p. 217, and on *chabhurah-chabburah*, 236).

But this is a book which grapples with some of the central doctrines of the faith, and with the thought of perhaps the greatest of the prophets, with honesty, acuteness and depth.

There are misprints apparently on p. 70, line 16 ab im; p. 74, lines 10 ab im. and 13; p. 104, line 2; p. 229, lines 11 and 15.

F. D. KIDNER.

## THE PARTY SYSTEM IN GREAT BRITAIN.

*By Ivor Bulmer-Thomas. Phoenix House. pp. 328. 25/-.*

Mr. Bulmer-Thomas has most usefully filled a surprising gap in the literature of British political democracy. We have a good deal of material on Parliament, on Cabinet government and on local political institutions, but no recent study of the party system. Such a study is essential if we are to understand ourselves. The law and the constitution, it is true, take no more account of parties than they do of the office of Prime Minister, yet the heart of British politics is found in the party system. The author is peculiarly well qualified to write this study as he has been a Labour M.P. and is now a Conservative one; and on the whole the book is free from the *tenden* that such a personal political history might lead one to expect.

It is not a work of research, but it assembles a great deal of information over a wide field, and not otherwise easily accessible. It does this in a most readable fashion, so that the background knowledge which an intelligent citizen ought to possess becomes a pleasure to acquire. The book begins with some simple general history from the seventeenth century to 1951 as the basis for a discussion of the present two-party system. Various schemes for electoral reform are persuasively rejected. The third section on party organization is the heart of the book, and there follows a brief but useful treatment of such related matters as the Press, parties and Religion, and parties in local Government. Weaknesses are admitted—the selection of candidates comes in for most criticism—but in general the working of the party system is ably defended as making for a healthy democracy. Many of the sections could well be expanded into books, and it is clear how much research there is waiting to be done in this field by students of political theory and government.

Minor points of criticism come to mind. The Conservative Party has always refused to give details of how it is financed, and Mr. Bulmer-

Thomas has not been able, or has not wished, to get behind this studied vagueness. He also much underestimates the Tory character of the bulk of the provincial press. But points such as these are trifles compared with the general merits of the book.

The author is a prominent Anglican and that is one reason why readers of *THE CHURCHMAN* should be interested in it. A much more important reason, however, is that Christians are so muddled about politics, and often so misinformed, that they are ineffective where they ought to be usefully discharging the duties of citizenship. Some are uncritically Right; others unrealistically Left; many are cynical about party politics and have no understanding of the necessary role of power in public life and how it should be controlled; many are just uninterested, and therefore irresponsibly support the *status quo*. Yet God has placed us in a political order in which He requires our responsible participation as a necessary part of our service to our neighbour. That participation in Britain requires us to come to grips with the party system and to understand the basic theory of our political life. This book provides our only guide to the former and a persuasive discussion of the latter. It is important for both clergy and laity, and if the cost is too much for clerical purses let it at least be got from libraries.

The following misprints have been noted: p. 83, for Zetland read Shetland; p. 188, for than read that; p. 231, 1797 is erroneous; p. 249, for inestricably read inextricably; p. 274, for Queensborough read Queenborough; p. 294, for ar read or.

RONALD H. PRESTON.

## GENESIS I-XI.

*Alan Richardson. S.G.M. 7/6.*

This further addition to the Torch Bible Commentaries is fully up to the high standard which we now expect from volumes in this series. Both the matter and the general lay-out are excellent.

The book contains thirty pages of introduction and ninety-four pages of commentary, which appears to be the right proportion in a book of this kind. In the introductory section Dr. Richardson first deals with the place of Genesis in the Jewish canon of Scripture, and then proceeds to discuss the Pentateuch in the light of modern research. He expounds briefly and clearly the critical orthodoxy of J, E, D, and P, and then presents this theory of the sources dressed in the latest fashion. "One thing at least seems fairly generally agreed: it is impossible to date these sources as belonging to or confined within any particular period. Each of them represents a current of tradition or way of thinking which persists through Israel's history. . . ." The character of J and P, the sources with which we are concerned in this part of Genesis, is then considered. The section on "The Parables of Genesis" is of particular interest. These 'parables' are the two creation stories, the Fall, Cain and Abel, the Flood and the Tower of Babel. In this connection the use of the word "myth" is considered and rejected because of the fact that "mythical" conveys to most minds the impression that we are dealing with fiction, not fact. "A

parable is a story which may or may not be literally true (no one asks whether the Good Samaritan ever literally 'happened'); it conveys a meaning beyond itself." After thus defining what he means by "parable", the author adds, "It is of the utmost importance to realize that the parables of Genesis are to be read in the way that we read poetry, not prose". The general attitude of the author will be sufficiently indicated by the addition of one further quotation: "The parables of Creation do not offer us a theory, a philosophical hypothesis, of how the world came into existence; nor does the parable of the Fall offer us a scientific analysis of human nature. On the contrary, they offer me personal knowledge about my existence, my dependence upon God, my alienation from Him, my need of reconciliation to Him". Thus, I must understand that the truth expressed applies to me; that, for instance, I am Adam. Thus a conflict between "science" and "Genesis" is impossible. In passing, it may be asked whether all this is quite satisfactory. It does not matter for the Gospel story whether or not the Good Samaritan "happened"; surely it does matter for the whole subsequent story of the Bible whether or not the Creation or the Fall 'happened'.

In the Commentary each section is dealt with, first, in a general way, and then comment is made on the actual text. We are given here just the right amount of information and guidance, and no difficulties are avoided. The really valuable thing about the whole volume is the grand theological emphasis throughout. The Creation narratives are dealt with in turn. In the case of the J account the author points out the anthropomorphisms. He is convinced that the writer did not take his own figures literally. God planting the garden, Adam's rib, the Lord God walking in the cool of the day, and similar features, are all the language of the parable. "Such childishness would be incompatible with the simple, majestic and indeed transcendent conception implicit in the phrase, 'Jahweh God made earth and heaven', and with the whole conception of God in J". Particularly in the comment on Genesis cc. 2 and 3 are many things that are most suggestive and thought-provoking, and most excellently put. We may not reject the story of "The Fallen Angels" in Gen. vi. 1-4 as a piece of pagan mythology. It contains an essentially biblical insight. We are to understand that "the men of the Bible took the facts of sin and evil seriously; the Fall was not merely a human catastrophe but was cosmic in its scope, affecting the whole creation". Even the genealogies are found to have "a profound theological significance which is germane to the theme of the Bible as a whole".

That the early chapters of Genesis are figurative and symbolical, though conveying great facts and truths, is no new doctrine. It was held, for instance, by Bishop Handley Moule thirty-five years ago. Yet there will be many who are not prepared to go as far as Dr. Richardson in this direction. However, there is very much here of profound spiritual insight, which should be a delight to all students of the Bible. It would be a great mistake to miss this book because one's presuppositions are different from those of the author. W. G. BROWN.

## FOOLISHNESS TO THE GREEKS.

By *T. R. Milford*. *S.C.M. Press*, 1953. 6/-.

This is one of the freshest little books I have read for a long time. It consists of eight chapters, the first six of which constituted addresses given in the course of a mission to the University of Toronto in 1952. Chapter 7 is "an attempt to explain, mainly in terms of prayer, the meaning of being 'in Christ' here and now". Chapter 8 is intended to give an intellectual justification for the method of speaking in the rest—it is more 'philosophical' in its approach than the preceding chapters.

The Chancellor of Lincoln has a way of understanding the contemporary mind and catching the contemporary phrase, which makes this book suitable to put into the hands of a modern sceptic or agnostic. It is shot through with humour and often reaches a high level of religious insight. One quotation—on thanksgiving—must suffice:

"Thanks be to God who has matched us with His hour.' Thanks for 'each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go'. Thanks for the knocking down of screens; thanks for the blowing away of dust. Thanks for forgiveness, given and received. Thanks for youth, while we have it, and for middle age, which is so much more interesting, when it comes: and, if we live to see our children's children, and peace upon Israel, thanks for the faithful Israelite's blessing. But the best is yet to be. Give thanks for death, and death shall be the last best offering of life's long Eucharist."

A book to read, and to lend.

F. D. COGGAN.

## AMY CARMICHAEL OF DOHNAVUR.

By *Frank Houghton*. *S.P.C.K.* pp. 390. 12/6.

The reading of this book was a moving spiritual experience, for it is a book which glorifies the goodness and the power of God to the full. An outstanding Christian biography is a rare thing these days, and the reason for this must not be attributed to any supposed dearth of able biographers, but to the lamentable fact that Christians who fit into the truly apostolic category have become very difficult to discover. Amy Carmichael was a woman of genuine apostolic calibre who set out, in all simplicity, to prove the faithfulness of God and to put into practice day by day our Lord's commandment of love. The sub-title to this book—"The Story of a Lover and Her Beloved"—is entirely appropriate. It was unquenchable Christlike love that caused her, in the face of odds that were, humanly speaking, insuperable, to devote her life to the rescue of Indian temple children who, many of them while still infants, are set aside for a life of immorality and debasement. It was the same principle of love—"pure, shining love", as Bishop Houghton describes it—which created and has all along sustained the Dohnavur Fellowship, enabling the members of the community to triumph over sorrow and disappointment and every assault of the evil one, and permitting them to witness the development, from the humblest beginnings, of a work which now stands as a magnificent monument to the sovereign love and grace of Almighty God. Here, surely, is proof irrefutable that the same power of the Holy Ghost

which the Apostles of old enjoyed is still available to God's servants in the twentieth century if they will but trust Him and keep His commandments.

It is true, as Bishop Houghton points out, that a little one has here become a thousand (*cf.* Isa. lx. 22), for it all started in 1901 when a little Indian girl fled from the temple precincts to "Amma" for protection, and when "Amma" died fifty years later practically a thousand souls were being housed, cared for, and instructed in the Dohnavur compound. The practical woman and the mystic were strangely but finely blended in Amy Carmichael's character, but above and behind all else she was a saint of simple childlike faith whose fellowship with her Heavenly Father was so intimate that she expected Him to make His will known to her from day to day, and then to enable her to put that will into effect. She never asked for money nor even made known the particular needs of the work to others: it was more than sufficient for her that God knew the need and had promised to supply it all according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Bishop Houghton will not desire praise for the manner in which he has executed his task as biographer, for he has performed it as a service to the Lord. Suffice it to say that, as those who know him will have expected, the book is written with calm graciousness and spiritual discernment. Amy Carmichael's own books and verses have been a source of blessing to many over the past half century. Now that she has been promoted to the heavenly glory she will continue to speak and live and love through the pages of this biography, and God will continue to enrich many through this testimony to the power of His beauty and grace in a life which was to such a degree "conformed to the image of His Son".

PHILIP E. HUGHES.

## THE WRITINGS OF ST. LUKE.

*By Roland Koh. Diocesan Literature Committee, 1 Lower Albert Road, Hongkong. 3/6.*

This book provides an attractive and significant sample of the reaction of an able, industrious and well-read Eastern mind to modern scientific criticism of the Gospels. First, as a Christian the writer confesses that he has had his mind disturbed, when he found the historicity of parts of the New Testament questioned by eminent scholars. He has in consequence set himself to discover alternative and more conservative hypotheses; and confesses that the interpretations as outlined in his book have helped to restore peace to his mind.

His main contentions are that the "former treatise", to which Luke refers in Acts i. 1, is Proto-Luke, written A.D. 58-60; that Paul encouraged Luke to put together such a written record of our Lord's life and teaching for use in Gentile evangelism; that the source L, which Luke used, was originally connected with Decapolis not Caesarea; that Acts was prepared as an apologia for Christianity to help in Paul's defence at his trial in Rome, and was therefore completed by A.D. 63; and that the full Third Gospel was not put together until after A.D. 70.

One reader at least is left feeling that there is here an illustration of the potential danger inherent in being forced to fight an enemy with

his own weapons—in this case subjective hypotheses, which are no sure safeguard of the coveted peace of mind. Would that the works of Western Biblical scholars helped to inform and instruct the faith, rather than to arouse the doubts and misgivings of Eastern converts to Christianity.

A. M. STIBBS.

## SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

*By John Drewett. Highway Press. 6/-.*

This short book is a refreshing, readable analysis of Nationalism and Communism (the two modern cultures which 'both serve the function of religion to their adherents') in the light of Christianity as it has been and as, in the author's belief, it shall be. For Mr. Drewett believes that we are on the verge of a world revolution; he believes that the signs of the times point to the coming birth of a world community of which Christianity shall be the midwife—if, that is, Christians 'equip themselves for the task'.

Sixty-seven pages might seem too short for the theme. But in spite of inevitable generalizations Mr. Drewett succeeds in offering a stimulating study of Christianity's part in the world scene, and a book for the times which may be read with ease by layman or parson. Yet, not every reader will agree with the author's conclusions. 'Christian International' may be going into action, as he says; and he gives a vivid summary of the work being done, and to be done, in the home, in education, and in politics. But the crux of the matter, the individual, does not receive sufficient attention, and the result is a suggestion that the Church's rightful purpose is to bring in the kingdom by social and political action.

J. C. POLLOCK.

## MATTERS OF LIFE AND DEATH: AN ENQUIRY INTO SPIRITUALISM, FAITH HEALING, AND PSYCHIC RESEARCH TO-DAY.

*By Geoffrey Murray. Sidgwick & Jackson. 10/6.*

This is one of the rare books on the subject of psychical research that is written without an axe to grind. Mr. Geoffrey Murray, as a journalist, conducted an enquiry into the subjects specified in the sub-title, trying to be as impartial as possible. As a result he has produced an informed picture of most aspects of this strange world, whose laws have not yet been classified. Obviously one who approaches the book from the standpoint of the Biblical revelation will not agree with all the conclusions, but all the comments are fair.

In view of the posters in the London streets advertising a certain spiritualist paper with the words, "Life after death proved", it is interesting to read Mr. Murray's comment on page 78; "What is the nature of the Spirit World? What is the truth about life in heaven and in hell? Because of the divergence of Spiritualist teaching, the answers given by the different sects are sometimes at variance, just as their theology does not always agree".

J. STAFFORD WRIGHT.

## NOTES ON BOOKS RECEIVED

**The Anglican Pulpit To-day.** Edited by F. D. Gifford (*Mowbray*, 15/-). These 'representative sermons by leading Preachers of the Anglican Communion', edited by the Dean of the Philadelphia Divinity School, include sermons by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London, and Anglican dignitaries and clergy in all parts of the world. Forty-two such sermons can scarcely be truly representative of Anglican preaching, and twenty-nine are from the United States or Canada. Only five are from Great Britain. The Provost of Nairobi and Dr. Barton Babbage, lately Dean of Sydney, are among the very few evangelicals. Yet with all its obvious limitations it is good to read and study, for good preaching, whatever its subject, must beget good preaching.

**Bless this Roof.** By Julia Burton and Phyllis Garlick (*Highway Press*, 3/6). A story of a Nigerian girl, born of a Christian mother in a pagan home, and growing up to become a Christian nurse, and then to found a home of her own. It gives an insight into the difficulties and joys of being a Christian in a country still predominantly pagan, and is a fine testimony to work being done by women missionaries and by African pastors and their wives.

**The Confessions of Jean-Jacques Rousseau.** A new translation by J. M. Cohen (*Penguin Classics*, 5/-). This complete edition will prove most useful to the student, and makes more accessible for the general reader the thought and experiences of Rousseau. It is also, naturally enough, full of human interest and entertainment. Unfortunately, to pack it into six hundred and six pages in paper covers has led inevitably to a print which is rather too small for comfort.

**The Pope's Men.** By Nathaniel Micklem (*Independent Press*, 1/-). This brief story of the Roman Church, written at the request of the Life and Work Committee of the Congregational Union, is so sane and balanced, giving a clear and reasoned exposition of the dangers of Romanism, that it may be thoroughly recommended.

**Helping the Lay Preacher.** By John Wilding (*Independent Press*, 6/-). A book packed with hints on sermon-making and sermon-delivery, and the conduct of informal services. Specially to be recommended for students, and speakers at Crusader Classes. Experienced preachers will also read it with profit.

**The Word of the Lord Came.** . . . By Eric Fenn (*S.C.M.*, 3/6). Mr. Fenn prepared these 'imaginary introductions' to twenty of the books of the Bible for the children's magazine of the Bible Society. The three major prophets and five of the minor are included, and nine epistles, two gospels, Acts and Revelation. A real help for Sunday school teachers and the like.

**The Rosenberg Letters.** Foreword by Canon L. John Collins (*Dennis Dobson*, 7/6). This collection of intimate letters of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, in the three years between arrest and execution, is certainly moving. The letters are presented without editorial comment. They cannot, therefore, in themselves, do more than raise an emotional sympathy unrelated to the facts of the case. But as human documents they are well worth reading.

**There's an Answer Somewhere.** By Marcus Knight and L. S. Hawkes (*Longmans*, 7/6). This book, which has a foreword by the Bishop of Portsmouth, was commissioned by the Church of England Youth Council as a result of numerous requests by youth leaders for guidance in answering questions on the Faith. Canon Knight of St. Paul's and the Rector of Blechingley have taken several hundred questions which actually had been asked, have sorted them into subjects, and then written a general answer for each section. This method avoids the shallow 'snappy answer', while keeping to the fore the original purpose of the book. Part I answers questions on 'What is the Christian Religion?' and Part II, 'What is Man?' The authors have throughout sought to avoid subscription to sectional beliefs, and though this means that no one will agree with all their interpretations, the book certainly represents a useful basis of discussion. Study of the question lists alone would help prepare youth leaders and clergy for the questions they may expect, and the answers given are stimulating.