

Book Reviews

China and the Cross: by Columba Cary-Elwes. Longmans, Green and Co., Ltd., London, xii + 323. 25s.

(Available from Orient Longmans, Post Box 2146, Calcutta.)

The dust jacket of this book carries the Chinese characters for the word 'truth'—a very appropriate sub-title, for the book is a balanced, fair and vivid outline of the history of the four missionary attempts to win China for Christ. The author has succeeded in avoiding both the error of compressing the material to such an extent that it lacks interest and also the error of making generalizations which need constant correction. A friend of the reviewer remarked after reading the book, 'I never knew the church in China had so long and interesting a history.'

Although written by a Roman Catholic, the book gives an adequate outline of the history of Protestant missions in China, and the author expresses his deep indebtedness to the writings of Prof. K. S. Latourette. Protestant denominations, however, puzzle him. He refers to the work of the London Missionary Society and the China Inland Mission with admiration, but goes on to speak of 'a locust swarm of out-of-the-way and in some cases erratic bodies' which flooded China in the early twentieth century. On the other hand, he does not gloss over the existence of conflicting groups in the Roman Catholic church which seriously hampered its work in China, as for example, in the Rites controversy.

The author attempts a diagnosis of the reasons for the failure of the Nestorian, Franciscan and Jesuit attempts to win China, and expresses the opinion that it was largely because of the lack of an adequate Chinese ministry. The figures he gives of foreign and Chinese priests are very illuminating, and deserve careful consideration by all missionaries.

The story of the Communist Revolution which brought to an end the fourth missionary attempt to win China is wisely told in an 'Epilogue', for, as the author says, 'We cannot truly guess the workings of Providence. We cannot foretell the future or gauge the significance of present events in the light of the not yet unfolded years ahead.' Yet he is not pessimistic; the book is written in the faith that 'one day the mind of Christ and the mind of China will be made one'.

The book is recommended to all who need a concise yet vivid history of the church in China. It is also recommended to all who are concerned with missionary work in any country, as it

illuminates the fundamental problems that beset every attempt to plant the church in a foreign land.

Calcutta

E. G. T. MADGE

How Shall They Hear? : by G. W. Ireson. S.P.C.K., viii + 222. Rs.6/37.

(Available from S.P.C.K., Post Box 1585, Delhi 6.)

Of books on preaching there seems to be no end. It is good for both those who have been in the ministry for many years and those who are beginning their ministry to read such books because they remind them of their responsibilities as ministers of the Word. Only a few such books will mean very much to the reader, and will remain on his bookshelves ; for the present reviewer two alone stand out as masterpieces to which he can turn again and again, namely H. H. Farmer's *The Servant of the Word* and Bishop Phillips Brooks' *Lectures on Preaching*—it is good to hear that S.P.C.K. is shortly to publish a new edition of this latter book. Canon Ireson's book will join Farmer's and Phillips Brooks' as books on preaching to which one can always turn.

This is a useful book, for several reasons : first, because it is very simply written, secondly, because Canon Ireson lays down clearly and decisively the principles of preaching and then proceeds to demonstrate the principles from his own sermons (of which no less than twelve are included in the Second Part of the book), thirdly, because Canon Ireson has a happy gift of illustrating his points in a way that enables the reader to retain them in mind.

We may wish that more attention had been paid to Biblical sermons—the Western approach to the Bible as suggested by Canon Ireson is not entirely satisfactory in India, where generally the Bible is given considerably more authority than in the West ; and we may wish that his sermons had been less Western in their atmosphere, but as they were preached for Western ears this is inevitable and only underlines Canon Ireson's insistence that the preacher should start from where his people are.

This is a book which all, especially Anglicans, who are concerned with the ministry of the Word, should read, a book that not only for its common sense but also for its insight into this very important part of the ministry should be read, marked, learned and inwardly digested. Those who do so will certainly find an improvement in their preaching, and laymen who are dissatisfied with the preaching of their parish priest or minister could hardly do better than give him a copy.

Calcutta

PETER MAY