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Reviews

The Catholicity of Protestantism. Edited by R. Newton Flew and Rupert E. Davies. (Lutterworth Press, 5s.).

As debates about Church Union are likely to proceed for years to come it is desirable that we should be well versed in the topics treated here. An indispensable guide to present discussions, this is a book to study. Issued by a group of Free Church theologians (Baptists represented by R. L. Child, P. W. Evans and E. A. Payne) this Report is concerned with the essential insights of Protestantism. While it has much to say about Lutheran, Reformed and Anglican Confessions and Articles, its main purpose is to set forth the convictions common to the Free Churches.

Perhaps it is a sign of the times that it was the Archbishop of Canterbury who asked for this Report. His object was to obtain as complete a picture as possible of the variety of views on the essential marks of the Church. One Report, entitled *Catholicity*, was published by the Anglo-Catholics three years ago and the Evangelicals of the Church of England are shortly to publish theirs under the title *The Fullness of Christ*.

The Catholicity of Protestantism is in some respects a reply to *Catholicity* for time and again it has to point out flagrant misrepresentations of the Protestant position and, indeed, distortions of historical facts. The Free Church authors have a clever way of turning defence into attack, though it is done in a spirit of Christian charity. What strikes us most is the plea that Catholics should honestly recognise that, whatever their theories as to how the Spirit of God should act, He has acted and acts still in the Churches of the Reformation.

This Report boldly affirms that the Reformers were out to restore the lost "wholeness" of the Church, accepts the views of Dr. T. W. Manson in *The Church's Ministry* as to what is the essential ministry of the Church and traces the differences between Catholics and Protestants to the doctrine of Authority. Much that is not readily accessible elsewhere (e.g. the Declaratory Statement of the Free Church Federal Council and citations from the 1927 Evangelical Free Church Catechism) is contained in this volume. P. S. Watson's detailed knowledge of Luther's works has obviously been of great service to the group not only

to refute the amazing ignorance of Luther's position shown by the authors of *Catholicity*, but also as a background to the various points at issue. The chapter on Justification is particularly important in view of the Anglo-Catholic group's objection to Justification by faith *alone*.

Of the many comments that might be made, the following must suffice. Have we really got clear the relation between the visible and the invisible Church? "We assert today," says the Report, "the faith of the Reformers that outside the Church there is no salvation." How much is meant by this? There are passages regarding the Sacraments which go beyond the valuation placed upon them by Baptists, and one rather suspects that a major task for our denomination is to give heed to ourselves as regards the Sacraments if we are to be true to Pauline and Reformation doctrine. "We ask," says the Report "for a more extensive interpretation of the meaning of the living presence of Christ with His people. . . . The Free Churches may have largely forgotten this part of their inheritance. . . ." If this confession is to be taken at its face value we cannot be complacent, for our whole claim to Catholicity is founded on the presence of Christ, realised and acknowledged.

For the moment we must leave our Anglican brethren to decide whether they are to return to Hooker and their XXXIX Articles and so stand clearly as a Church of the Reformation. If they so decide—and we may expect *The Fulness of Christ* to pull hard in that direction—we shall find them speaking the same language as ourselves. But on us Free Churchmen there is surely an obligation laid: if we have as much in common as this Report suggests we ought not to rest content with the present denominational set-up. Communions which are as agreed on the essential marks of the Church as this document maintains should surely take federation far more seriously and pray God to hasten the birth of a united Free Church.

K. C. DYKES.

The Prophetic Faith of our Fathers: the Historical Development of Prophetic Interpretation, by Le Roy Edwin Froom. Volume I. (Review and Herald, Washington, D.C. \$5.00.)

The second and third volumes of this massive essay in the history of interpretation appeared before the present volume, and the second has already been reviewed in this Journal (January 1949, pp. 41ff.). The fourth and final volume has yet to be written. The author is chiefly interested in the interpretation of the books of Daniel and Revelation, and has set himself the task of traversing the whole course of Christian interpretation from the

earliest days down to the present time. The work involved is truly enormous, and it has been carried through with a care and thoroughness that is deserving of the highest praise.

In the present volume the story is carried down to the Middle Ages, and we have a vast panorama of exegetes through all the Early Church period and down to the Waldenses. A generous measure of biographical information about the various writers is given and a clear and accurate summary of their views on the fundamental significance of these portions of Scripture as a forecast of the future. No reader can fail to learn a vast amount from the study of this book. The author claims that the assembling of his materials has occupied more than sixteen years, and it is certain that they have been years of unrelenting labour. A much longer period would not seem excessive to any who have had experience of this kind of work.

Needless to say, the author has not undertaken this labour in the interests of objective study alone. He belongs to a particular school of prophetic interpretation, and holds that in these portions of Scripture we have a blue print of the course of the ages. He knows, however, that while this has been a common view amongst interpreters throughout the years, they have differed very widely from one another in their interpretations, and even in the principles which they have followed in those interpretations. The principles of the school to which the author belongs were not clearly formulated until after the close of the period here covered, and therefore the study is wholly objective throughout this volume. The anti-papal interest, however, which is one of the major characteristics of his view, already figures in not a few of the writings which are here examined. In the succeeding volumes, though the author is chiefly interested in a particular strand running through the complex pattern, his work has still very high objective value, and it is for that that the reviewer holds it in such high esteem. He himself wholly repudiates the author's own school of interpretation and finds every school that sees here a reliable blue print of future history to be discredited by its own record. The commendation of this work is therefore the more sincere because it is given by one who does not share its point of view.

H. H. ROWLEY.

The Whig Interpretation of History, by H. Butterfield, M.A.
(G. Bell & Sons, Ltd., 7s. 6d.).

The widespread interest aroused by Professor Butterfield's broadcast lectures *Christianity and History* has naturally stimulated the demand for others of his writings. The volume before

us is a re-issue of an essay first published in 1932. It consists of a lively and sustained criticism of "the tendency in many historians to write on the side of Protestants and Whigs, to praise revolutions provided they have been successful, to emphasize certain principles of progress in the past and to produce a story which is the ratification if not the glorification of the present." What Professor Butterfield attacks may be described more briefly as the study of the past for the sake of the present or the offering of moral judgments by historians. In his view the historian should use his art to emphasize not the likenesses of the past to the present, but the unlikenesses; he must not impose a pattern on history, but must recognise that the whole past produced the whole present. History is "a clash of wills out of which there emerges something that probably no man ever willed." Too often the historian casts himself for the rôle of judge and forgets that he is really only an expert witness or a detective. The true task of the historian is detailed research; his art is a descriptive one. All this is well, if provocatively, put, its main application being to the study of the sixteenth century. In the last section, Lord Acton is severely criticised for some of the judgments he offered.

This is a book which all who read or write history should know and ponder. Is it, however, quite fair to describe as the Whig and Protestant interpretation failings that are also evident in the writings of not a few Tories and Roman Catholics (as is in fact implied on page thirty)? Is there not also in this essay a little more fervour and righteous indignation than is really consonant with the principles it sets out to expound—though it may be confessed that it is these qualities that make it such pleasant and stimulating reading? And could not Professor Butterfield have indicated to us in a new foreword how he would reply to the criticisms of his book which Professor H. G. Wood offered in his 1933-34 Hulsean Lectures, *Christianity and the Nature of History*?

ERNEST A. PAYNE.

The Problem of Christ in the Twentieth Century, by W. R. Matthews. (Oxford University Press, 7s. 6d.).

The four chapters which make up this slim but important book were delivered as Maurice Lectures at King's College, London. The distinguished author is convinced that Christian theologians must attempt to wrestle with the doctrine of the Person of Christ in the light of branches of knowledge of which those who put together the traditional formulas were unaware, in particular psychology and psychical research. Dr. Matthews

urges that the definitions of the ancient creeds should not be regarded as dogmas, but as starting-points for further reflection. He admits that, in drawing upon recent studies of the nature of personality, he raises more questions than he answers. The final lecture offers a tentative approach to a modern Christology which discards the older idea of substance and thinks in terms of "behaviour events" or willed actions. "The pattern of the Father's will, on this hypothesis, is the essential reality of the temporal personality of the Son." But there is an eternal aspect of human personality. The uniqueness of Jesus lies in the fact that inspiration, which for the rest of mankind is intermittent, was for him constant. "Jesus is the one completely inspired person, and, because he is completely inspired, he is the temporal manifestation in a human life of the Eternal Word." This is a brave book, written with the Dean's characteristic clarity and forthrightness, and it should appeal to many who desire to make use of modern concepts. Whether its conclusions are as revolutionary, or as far removed from those of the Fathers as the earlier pages suggest, may perhaps be doubted.

ERNEST A. PAYNE.

The Philosophy of Religion: A Consideration of the More Profound Aspects of Religious Thought, by William S. Morgan. (Philosophical Library, New York, \$6.00.)

The writer here claims "to present the philosophy of religion from the viewpoint of a unitary conception of the universe." The first section of the work deals with the nature of philosophy and of religion. Evidence is collected for defining philosophy as the search for a unitary principle underlying all experience, and religion as "the realisation that we are essential and contributory participants in God, nature and humanity." Book two is devoted to epistemology, with chapters on Kant and T. H. Green. Both are commended for their search for a principle of unity; and their failure to find it is examined in detail. In Book three the idea of causation is considered historically, metaphysically and psychologically, with a view to finding a unitary system incorporating our conceptions of God, nature and man. The important point brought out is the connection between theories of causation and the subjective experiences of volition and activity. In Book four ethics and aesthetics are treated, with sections on the problems of evil and freedom. The last book, on the phenomena of the religious life and the destiny of man, is an interpretation of religious experience and belief in the light of the position which the writer has sought to establish. The book concludes with the confident and optimistic assertion that "higher and

higher shall the human soul ascend, realising more and more its unity with the infinite and participating more and more in the ideal work of the whole creation."

The most valuable quality of this book is its development of the notion that the universe and ultimate reality cannot be comprehended at all apart from the whole range of personal experience. Emotion and volition as well as intellect are keys to its understanding. But the cheerful optimism of the conclusion is achieved by a complete disregard of the experiences of remorse, failure and sin, and there is no consideration of personal relations, affection and sympathy. In the preface the writer expresses the hope that his viewpoint will do justice to the demands of the intellect and the needs of the heart. He makes a valuable attempt to keep the needs of the heart before the notice of the intellect, but it is very doubtful whether they could be satisfied by his highly metaphysical version of the Gospel.

G. ELWIN SHACKLETON.

St. Francis in Italian Painting, by George Kaftal. (George Allen & Unwin, 12s. 6d.).

This is the fourth volume in the new series "Ethical and Religious Classics of East and West." In the first half of the book the author gives a brief account of St. Francis and the sources on which our knowledge of him is based. The latter and more distinctive and interesting part consists of thirty-nine photographic reproductions of paintings by Italian masters from the twelfth to the late thirteenth centuries, with appropriate extracts from early "lives" of the saint. The aim of the book is said to be "to show that the religious and ethical values that St. Francis was striving after are as essential today as they were in his time." It cannot be said that much direct help is given in this direction.

ERNEST A. PAYNE.

Christ in the Early Church, by A. F. Titterton, Book ii in the series "The Bible and the Christian Faith," edited by C. B. Firth. (Ginn & Co., Ltd., 5s.) Reference Book, 5s.

The title of this volume, by A. F. Titterton is *Christ in the Early Church* and it tells the story of the Church from the Ascension to the Edict of Milan in 313. To say that it is as good an example of skilful and vigorous writing as any other volume of this admirable series is to give it high praise, and this it certainly deserves. The illustrations, thirty-six in all, are wholly admirable.

As with the rest of the series, the text book is accompanied by a reference book for teachers. This is thorough and well documented, and faces teaching difficulties courageously. Some useful analogies are suggested, for example, in dealing with the Trinity, the author adduces the illustration of "a human being, who may be at one and the same time, say, a doctor, a father, and a son." Theologians will purse their lips and murmur "Sheer Sabellianism!" but the children will be helped nearer an understanding of the Faith.

G. E. BENFIELD.

Walgrave Baptist Church, 1700-1950, by F. C. Lusty. (Billingham & Son, Northampton).

The History of the Baptist Church, Dartmouth, by J. W. Binmore. (Tozer & Co., Dartmouth).

A Southwark Ship. A Southwark Church, by A. D. Belden and W. M. Field. (The Pilgrim Church House, Great Dover Street, S.E.1., 1s., postage 2d.).

These three local histories have, each of them, an interest for others besides the members of the churches concerned.

The first pastor of the Walgrave Church shared in the formation of the Northampton Association in 1764. The second minister was present in Kettering at the formation of the Baptist Missionary Society, though by then he had moved to Braybrooke. Like so many village churches, Walgrave has been the nursery of a long succession of men and women of conviction and character. It was the scene of the first pastorate of Dr. S. W. Hughes, who is now again in residence in the village and the beloved *Pastor Emeritus*. Mr. F. C. Lusty, a greatly honoured nonagenarian, who as long ago as 1896 was appointed assistant minister to the late Dr. Thomas Phillips at Kettering and whose continued vigour and enthusiasm belie his years, has edited and brought up to date an earlier history of the church. He reprints in full the Church Covenant of 1783. His valuable record is well illustrated and excellently produced.

The little church at Dartmouth dates from the early years of the seventeenth century. The original deeds and other records were destroyed in the air raids on Plymouth in 1941. The present pastor has drawn on an account of the church prepared in 1883. It is good to read that this historic cause looks forward to a share in the opening up of work on the new Townstal Estate.

Mr. Binmore suggests that there may have been Baptists in Dartmouth in 1620, when the Pilgrim Fathers had temporary

shelter there. The "Antient Church" of Southwark, of which Mr. Belden and Mr. Field gave a brief account, provided a small London contingent to the *Mayflower*. With this church were associated many of the early Separatist leaders and martyrs, and from it there came in 1633 the first Particular Baptist Church. In the nineteenth century Dr. John Humphreys and Dr. John Waddington were Congregationalist pastors in Southwark. The building erected under the leadership of the latter was destroyed by enemy action in 1940. Dr. A. D. Belden, once a scholar in the Sunday School, is now the Honorary Superintendent. Plans have been made for the erection of new premises.

ERNEST A. PAYNE.

Lord of All, by J. Trevor Davies, M.A., B.D., Ph.D. (Independent Press, Ltd., 184 pp., 7s. 6d.).

Dr. Davies examines the claim of Christ to absolute Lordship, and in a series of studies, based on incidents and sayings in the Gospels, makes plain what this involves in daily living. He writes with sympathy and understanding, and the simplicity of his language does not conceal the thought and conviction behind it. It is not a superficial book. Though avowedly written for "the wayfaring man," any reader will find his spiritual life enriched by its pages. He deals shrewd blows at our common failings and satisfactions but opens the way to a deeper experience of the redeeming power of the Risen Lord.

FRANK BUFFARD.

Faith that Moves Mountains, by C. H. Powell, B.A. (Independent Press, 12s. 6d.).

This is an excellent piece of workmanship. The writer is deeply concerned with the lack of spiritual power in the modern church. His thesis is that the key which opens the door into the divine resources is faith. The book is a detailed study of faith as it is seen in the words and acts of Christ and in the pages of each book in the New Testament. He finds evidence in the later books that already the scope of faith is being narrowed and that belief in "The Faith" as a body of doctrine is replacing trust in a living Saviour. The nature of faith, the aids and hindrances to its growth, are lucidly expounded.

The average minister will find its pages will repay study. They stimulate thought, quicken conscience, and provide much that could be usefully passed on to a congregation.

FRANK BUFFARD.

The Free Church Tradition in the Life of England, by Ernest A. Payne. (S.C.M. Press, 8s. 6d.).

When this valuable and enlightening study first appeared in 1944 it justly received a warmly appreciative welcome. Such has been the continuing demand that a third edition has now been issued. For this the work has been completely revised and reset, a few new paragraphs added and the bibliographical notes brought up-to-date (to such an extent that *The Catholicity of Protestantism*, reviewed elsewhere in this issue, is included). In a prefatory note to the new edition Mr. Payne states that during the years that have passed since the book was first written certain indications have appeared which lead him to believe that the period in Free Church history he entitled "Hesitancy" is now coming to an end. At least one of those indications is surely the renewed interest in the story and witness of Nonconformity partly evidenced by the various books on the subject which have appeared in recent years. To these this revised issue of Mr. Payne's notable volume is a welcome addition, displaying as it does the perception, balanced judgement, historical knowledge and skilful writing which we have learned to expect from the new Secretary of the Baptist Union. Those who unwisely omitted to obtain for themselves a copy of the earlier editions now have the opportunity of repairing the omission.

GRAHAM W. HUGHES.

Baptist Union Diploma.

The Baptist Union Diploma in Religious Knowledge is soon to be instituted. The purpose of this new venture is to promote a deeper understanding of the Christian Faith, equip men and women in our churches for more effective service and help school teachers to fit themselves to give religious instruction. Divided into three parts, the syllabus is designed to provide systematic Scripture study, some knowledge of Church History and fundamental Christian doctrines. Baptist History and principles and training in various forms of Christian service are also included. Normally three years study will be needed to gain the Diploma, and its possession is to be in future the recognised qualification for accredited lay-preachers. Rev. A. S. Clement, 54, Spencer Avenue, Coventry, has been appointed Organising Secretary, and he will gladly forward full particulars regarding the Diploma to those who apply to him.