

Book Reviews

The Fellowship of Believers: by Ernest A. Payne. Carey Kingsgate Press. 1954. Price 8s. 6d.

The Life and Faith of the Baptists: by H. Wheeler Robinson. Carey Kingsgate Press. 1946. Price 6s.

Both these books by recognized leaders of the Baptist Churches in the U.K. are revised and enlarged editions of previous publications, Dr. Wheeler Robinson completing his revision just before his death. Learning about Baptists from Baptist authors provides a reminder that we often need, that it is much better for us to learn of other traditions than our own at the hands of their own exponents, and not as it were at second-hand.

Much that is said in Dr. Payne's book is relevant to our discussions with one another in India, the more so because he gives particular attention to the doctrines of the Church, Ministry and Sacraments. At times he is arguing for causes with which not all his Baptist brethren would agree, but the book is marked by charity and a breadth of understanding. He deals for example with the question, whether baptism is to be regarded as only of individual significance, or as a Church ordinance, and a divinely ordained means of entry into the visible Church. There are a number of useful appendices, giving some statements of faith made by the Baptist Churches in the U.K.

Dr. Wheeler Robinson approaches his subject from a different angle and, after an introductory chapter on origins, gives eight short biographical sketches of individuals or churches. But like Dr. Payne, he gives much attention to the doctrines of Baptism and of the Church.

K. N. JENNINGS

The Doctrine of Our Redemption: by Nathaniel Micklem. Second Edition: Oxford University Press, London. 1960. Pp. 115. Price 12s. 6d.

This re-issue of a Lenten Book commissioned by Archbishop William Temple is to be welcomed. It is not intended for the professional theologian, but for every man who is prepared to think about his faith, and to work that thought into the stuff of his devotional life.

Dr. Micklem's wide but unobtrusive scholarship skims the centuries to illustrate his theme. By an acute selection of the salient features of each theological age, he highlights the chief

emphases of Christian teaching on the Atonement in a sequence both historical and logical. But this is no arid textbook of the history of doctrine. By his vivid style and telling illustrations, the writer challenges his readers to see in each theological viewpoint a deeply-felt spiritual awareness of God. Without disguising the rigorous intellectual questing that has gone to make an Augustine or an Anselm, Dr. Micklem succeeds in evoking the overtones of mystery to which formal theology is a pointer. It is written (in his own words) not only to stimulate thought, but 'quicken devotion also'.

In the result, the layman will find theological reasoning that is alive and relevant, the busy minister some good sermon illustrations, and the student of theology a stimulating exposition of Melancthon's dictum, 'The heart makes a theologian'.

Serampore

J. C. HINDLEY

New Testament Greek. Teach Yourself Books: by D. F. HUDSON.
E.U.P.

This is an immediately attractive book. It is small enough not to daunt the beginner. It is neatly printed, and enters into its subject without a lot of tiresome technicalities. The style is racy and sometimes amusing—'the future, like the donkey, has a tail added; the past is like the elephant with a trunk as well'. The order of lessons is sensible and the verb does not appear as formidable as in some grammars. The paradigms and lists of verbs are well set out with useful notes not always easy to find elsewhere, such as that whereas the other tenses of the verbs *ἵσταμαι* and *δέχομαι* are active in meaning, the aorist passive is passive in meaning. See also the useful information on pages 119 and 135. It is pleasant to have some non-Biblical exercises, sometimes in story form. There is a key to the exercises, and even some pictures!

This book, as might by now be guessed, is written in the belief that it ought not to be necessary to bully men into learning Greek as though it were a drudgery. There is no doubt that grammars such as Nunn, while otherwise excellent and still useful for teaching, do frighten people by the difficulty of their English style, and by the assumption that you learned Latin at school. Most of us who use Nunn do not bother to read through all Nunn's grammatical explanations but tell our students the same thing in simpler English. So a book such as this is welcome and in general its grammatical notes are simple, clear and easy to remember.

There are a few minor blemishes due to over-compression, which could easily be rectified in a later edition.

1. If St. Paul could do without accents, it might be argued, so can we. Perhaps this is true, but, since they do serve a useful purpose in distinguishing otherwise indistinguishable forms, an introduction to them seems not entirely otiose.

2. On page 20, the forms ἦς and ἦμεθα, both found in the New Testament, are omitted from the imperfect of εἶμι.

3. You are left to guess, in Ex. iib, that ἐν is followed by the dative.

4. On page 32 ἐάσω is a bad example to bracket with καλέω and τελέω as verbs that do not lengthen the contract vowel in the future. The usual triplet is αἰνέω. ἐάσω is irregular for a different reason and is followed in this by several other verbs in -αω.

5. In explaining, on page 35, the future of liquid verbs, it seems simpler to say that they have the endings of contract verbs in -έω; but admittedly these endings have not yet been taught.

6. ἔλεξα is given as the aorist of λέγω on page 47 and εἶπον on page 50 without further explanation.

7. On page 48, in the section on the aorist of liquid verbs, to the words 'Also they strengthen the vowel in the stem', 'where possible' might be added.

8. On page 66, a student might be forgiven for thinking that λύω had a second aorist middle. Surely compression has gone too far here.

9. It is not clearly stated—see page 75 and the exercise on page 96—that in a prohibition in the aorist, the imperative cannot be used and the subjunctive must.

10. Page 106: προς with the accusative sometimes means 'with', especially in St. John.

11. On pages 121 and 122, further examples of the accusative and infinitive construction should be given, since this is unfamiliar to Indian students and the second example really does not belong under this heading.

12. It would be more accurate to say, on page 126, that the genitive absolute is used when the subject of the subordinate clause is different from that of the main clause, since the rule as stated by Mr. Hudson is violated by the New Testament—e.g. in Mark 14: 1, quoted by Nunn.

13. The introduction to conditional sentences seems to me one occasion when Mr. Hudson's usual clarity has deserted him, and what really is a very simple matter becomes more complicated than need be. Sentence No. 9 in Ex. xxva does not agree with the rule given in the table.

14. On page 82, τιματαυ is misprinted for τιματαυ.

I must admit that many of the sentences given in the exercises for translation take an unduly pessimistic view of mankind, but perhaps this arises from Mr. Hudson's experience of teaching with earlier grammars!

Now no doubt one must be intelligent if one is to teach oneself a language, but I often felt that the exercises were hard for a beginner, and certainly too hard for, say, an L.Th. student. This book would be useful in the hands of a good teacher with an intelligent class; but, with a duller group, I doubt if it would entirely obviate the need for 'bullying', that is, insisting that exercises be done, given in and corrected regularly.

In spite of these criticisms, this is as good a book as I have

seen to arouse a man's interest in New Testament Greek, but, as the author himself recognizes, there is no quick way of learning a language. Jude the Obscure sadly discovered that Greek is not a code, the principles of which can be grasped and then simply applied. Greek is a language, the learning of which demands a certain steady application. While we should never try to persuade men that this labour can be avoided, all books, such as this, that put a pleasant face on that labour are to be welcomed.

The Imitation of God in Christ: by E. J. Tinsley. S.C.M.

This is a dignified but rather disappointing book. It is called 'An Essay on the Biblical basis of Christian Spirituality', and begins with a chapter on the meaning of mysticism, rebutting criticisms often levelled against it, and showing that, properly understood, it can be shown to rest on a Biblical foundation. We are in need of serious and scholarly books on the devotional life written from the non-Catholic side. A. R. George's *Communion with God* was useful, though it was somewhat too academic and hardly dealt with the actual practice of prayer; but other books are few. It was then with real hope that I turned to this book.

But in fact the book does not deal with prayer or the devotional life at all. It is simply concerned to demonstrate what is surely an obvious truism, namely that the true Christian life is based on the imitation of God's declared acts and Christ's own ways. It begins with a rather laboured attempt to show, by a study of the word 'way', that the Israelite idea of the good life was a following of the 'way' that God led his people from Egypt to the promised land. Turning to the New Testament, we are introduced to the 'Way of the Son of Man' (always printed with capital letters as if it were a Biblical phrase), in which the disciples were to walk. Ideas of the dynamic imitation of Christ are followed out in the Fourth Gospel and the Epistles. In these chapters, there are many incidental passages of real suggestiveness, but the book itself lacks the unity of a strongly-outlined and binding idea. Everyone knows that the Christian is called to imitate Christ, and it cannot be said that this book adds greatly to our understanding of this great conception. Moreover the body of the book deals with ethics not devotion, and it is therefore difficult to see its connection with the opening chapter.

Trivandrum

GEOFFREY PAUL

The Way of the Ascetics: by Tito Colliander. Hodder and Stoughton. Price 9s. 6d.

This book contains an exposition of asceticism based upon the writings of the holy fathers of the Orthodox Church, and it is intended to help ordinary people living in the world, engaged in their various avocations.

The essence of asceticism is described by the author as self-denial or the transference of love from the self to Christ without any change in outward conditions of life. This requires rooting out of all desire for enjoyment, a condition which may horrify the easy-going men and women of modern times. Some amount of self-denial is indispensable for anyone and the book gives a lot of practical suggestions along that line. The positive way of overcoming self through deeds of love for the brethren is not taken seriously by the author, though it is implied in the advice to take up the yoke of Christ. The book deals with the various aspects of the spiritual warfare and warns against the pitfalls of self-reliance, self-satisfaction and so on. The importance assigned by the author to ceaseless prayer and to the avoidance of extravagance is worthy of special note. The book as a whole, and especially the sections dealing with fasting, the use of icons and 'Jesus Prayer', add to our knowledge of the spirit of Orthodoxy.

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Revelation and the Bible: Contemporary Evangelical Thought,
1958: Carl F. H. Henry (Ed.). The Tyndale Press, London.
Pp. 413. Price 17s. 6d.

A symposium consisting of twenty-four essays with a short preface by the editor, the aim of the work is to present contemporary evangelical thought on 'Revelation and the Bible'. The contributors are from the United States of America, Great Britain and the Continent of Europe—an interdenominational team—ranging from Anglican Evangelicals to Missouri Lutherans.

The essayists recognize that Barth and Brunner have successfully weakened the influence of Liberalism in Protestant theology and emphasized the supernatural character of revelation, but find them unacceptable, as they have not done justice to the 'revelation-status of Scripture'. Scripture itself, maintain the essayists, is 'Revelation'.

The first six essays deal with Revelation. The subject is treated under General and Special Divine Revelation, Special Divine Revelation as Rational, as Historical and Personal, as Objective, as Scriptural and Contemporary Views of Revelation. The work then includes essays on the Witness of Scripture to its Inspiration, Our Lord's Use of Scripture, New Testament use of the Old Testament, Canon of the Old Testament, Canon of the New Testament, the Apocrypha, the Church Doctrine of Inspiration, and Contemporary Ideas of Inspiration, the Phenomena of Scripture, the Evidence of Prophecy and Miracles, the Holy Spirit and the Scriptures and the Principles of Interpretation. There are other essays which deal with the relevance of Biblical Archaeology, Biblical Criticism, Authority and Unity of the Bible.

The usefulness and value of the essays vary from one another.

Professor Berkouwer's treatment of General and Special Revelation, for instance, is clear and helpful, though he does not show himself free from inaccurate generalizations, a charge which he himself levels against liberalist and modernist scholars. The point of view of the writers may be indicated by noting that, according to one of them, the story of the Fall should be taken as 'an objective historical happening'. Another believes that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch, a claim which the Bible itself does not make.

There is plenty of scholarly and sound judgment in the essays of D. J. Wiseman on the Archaeological Confirmation of the Old Testament and of F. F. Bruce on Archaeological Confirmation of the New Testament. These are especially valuable to the general reader who does not have access to journals or recent publications on Biblical archaeology. But the title 'Confirmation' is misleading. So also the essays of N. H. Ridderbos and M. C. Tenny on Reversals of Old Testament Criticism and Reversals of New Testament Criticism respectively, though good as survey articles, suffer from misleading titles. The essays on the Authority of the Bible and the Unity of the Bible are disappointing.

The work appends a short but too selective bibliography, which in some branches is very one-sided. This is followed by an author index and a subject index. Of these, the latter is not carefully drawn. Besides there are inaccuracies in the indicated page numbers and omission of some important topics. There are also several errors in printing throughout the book.

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E. C. JOHN

Spirit of the Living God: by Leon Morris, B.Sc., M.Th., Ph.D.,
Inter-Varsity, London, 1960. Pp. 102. Price 4s.

Though neglected for a long time, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is being rediscovered in our time, and several books have been written in recent years on it. This small book by the Vice-Principal of Ridley College, Melbourne, adds to that number.

Consisting of eight chapters, the book refers in the first to the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus. In the second the author gives a brief summary of the Old Testament ideas on the Spirit of the Lord. He shows that the full revelation of the Spirit cannot be found in the Old Testament, but that it points forward to 'a coming day', when the Messiah would come and the reality of the Spirit would be made clear. Each of the next six chapters deals with one of the distinctive New Testament ideas about the Spirit. Chapter three takes up the question whether the Spirit is person or thing, and concludes that 'He is a person in His own right, with His own functions'. Chapter four attempts to prove that He is divine. The fifth chapter discusses 'The Spirit in the Church' and shows that the Church received its vigorous life and was 'set forth on the path of the work and worship' on the day

of Pentecost by the decisive and unrepeatable act of the coming of the Spirit, and that ever since 'the divine Spirit is active and sovereign in the Church'. Chapters six, seven and eight are concerned with the work of the Spirit in the life of the believer. This work is so radical that man can be said to have been born all over again. The author concludes in the final chapter that the view of the Spirit based on a trinitarian conception of God is absolutely essential, and that God expects all His people to experience the fullness of the Spirit.

The book rests on the conviction that for an understanding of the nature of God and the meaning of Christian service 'it is imperative that we come to grips with the doctrine of the Spirit'. Exceedingly well-written and aimed for the use of readers with no theological training, the book is a very valuable addition.

Yeotmal

K. C. MATHEW

Background to the New Testament : by J. R. Shaw.

A Guide for Living : by John Poulton.

(U.S.C.L. Lutterworth Press). 2s. each.

These brief studies are from a new series of Key Books, attractively produced, and intended presumably for the use of the laity. The *Background to the New Testament* gives a concise picture of Palestine in the time of Christ, in clear language, with maps and illustrations, all within 48 pages. It covers such varied items as agriculture, family life, and the religious and political parties of Judaism. Page 12 assures us that town gates used to have a small door in the centre, about 30 inches by 24 inches. Some of us would be hard-pressed to use them! There seem to be two mistakes on p. 45. Archelaus did not die in A.D. 6 but was deposed and banished to Gaul. The author also gives the impression of the years before A.D. 66 as a period of peace and good government in Palestine. The evidence seems to point to a contrary conclusion. But this book is well worth 2s. and is a good one to have by you to lend.

A Guide for Living seeks to answer the question, How do we know what is right? The answer is given in terms of the Christian fellowship, the Bible and conscience, about which there is a useful note. The author has an apt quotation from Origen on the Christian attitude to the Law of the O.T., and is particularly good when he deals with Christ's teaching. 'Our Lord was teaching about a life that was possible here and now to those who love Him.' 'He is explaining a life that He was living Himself, and which others could live if He was in them.'

His treatment of the Ten Commandments is good, particularly Nos. 4, 7 and 8, but he uses a rather unfortunate illustration of 'good causes', in pursuing which we might supplant God, namely the struggle in the West for personal advancement.

Many in the West, who desire a still higher standard of living, are not pursuing a good life, but being positively sinful at other people's expense.

K. N. JENNINGS

God Our Contemporary: by J. B. Phillips. Hodder and Stoughton. Price 3s. 6d.

First Questions on the Life of the Spirit: by Thomas E. Powers. Hodder and Stoughton. Price 15s.

Under the Wings of Their Prayers: by Margaret I. Linsey. Basil Blackwell. 4s. 6d.

Of these three new 1960 publications, *God Our Contemporary* by J. B. Phillips deserves special attention. This is the latest of the author's fifteen books. It is written in simple style, amazing clarity of thought, and penetrating in character.

The author sees a great gulf between the good men of faith and the good men of unfaith, and pleads for understanding. The former should understand the latter in the face of the fact that 'the whole language, teaching and climate of "Church" appears almost totally irrelevant to modern life'. The latter should understand the former because the irrelevancy of 'Church' is not really factual and because no intelligent seeker after truth can afford to live in complete ignorance of another man's point of view.

The author brings out the inadequacy of humanism which denies man any timeless point of reference by showing the limitations of science. He boldly presents the claims of Christianity, without being unmindful of the various criticisms against it. Men are challenged to a living faith in God who is our contemporary. The eternal God has revealed Himself by His entry into human history through Jesus Christ. The fellowship which Christ founded is the extension of His actual visit, and it is sustained by the living God. By participation in the fellowship men realize that God is their contemporary.

The issues considered in the book are by no means new. But the conviction and the soothing freshness with which the author writes will appeal to the readers.

Thomas E. Powers' book is a collection of varied materials from a questionnaire circulated among laymen to determine the greatest concerns today of those interested in religion. The book aims to make a general appeal to a faith in God and to suggest different practical aids in spiritual life. An attempt is made to satisfy the Catholic, the Protestant, the Hindu, the Muslim and all others alike, naturally with little success. The several good and profitable quotations from many scriptures and religious leaders, which it includes, are of value. Apart from this one very much doubts whether the book could be of any substantial help either to the believer or to the unbeliever.

Margaret Linsey's little book is an attempt to make available to Western readers, particularly of the Anglican ecclesiastical tradition, some of the prayers from the rich treasury of Eastern Orthodox Christianity. The author wants to share her experiences of Orthodox worship gained through the fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius. She discovers for herself that many prayers in the Orthodox treasury express also the Anglican feelings at vital points of the Holy Communion Service. So she has collected and arranged the prayers in such a way that they could be used as private prayers within the structure of the Anglican Service. Prayers from the Didache, St. Basil, St. Chrysostom, and so on add very much to a deeper understanding of the Holy Eucharist. This is a worth-while effort and one could reasonably expect that this little book will help to enrich and widen the spiritual life and vision of its readers.

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M. A. THOMAS

The Gospel is based not upon law, even if it be a new law, but upon Christ Himself, upon His personality. Such is the new ethics of grace and redemption. But we live on two planes, under the law and under grace, in the order of nature and in the spiritual order—and therein lies the immeasurable difficulty and complexity of a Christian's life in the world. Human society lives and builds up its kingdoms and civilizations under the power of the law; the Gospel revelation of the Kingdom of God is for it a catastrophe and the Last Judgement.

NICOLAS BERDYAEV