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Reviews

Die Baptisten: Lehre, Praxis, Geschichte, by J. D. Hughey. (J. G. Oncken Verlag Kassel, n.p.)

In the last few years the German Baptist Publishing House in Kassel has shown its renewed vitality and enterprise by the issue of a number of attractively produced paper-backed volumes of pocket size dealing with Baptist and Anabaptist history. The latest to appear comes from the pen of Professor J. D. Hughey of the Ruschlikon Seminary, and has been translated into German by his colleague, Dr. Claus Meister. Based on lectures given at the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey in 1957, it aims at providing a brief conspectus of the teaching practise and history of the Baptists.

Dr. Hughey's carefully documented study of the ebb and flow of religious liberty in Spain (published by the Carey Kingsgate Press in 1955) has established itself as an authoritative reference book. Of his gifts as a teacher and writer there can be no question. Moreover a volume of the kind before us is badly needed not only in the German tongue. It is, however, a more difficult task to give an accurate and balanced picture of the Baptist movement as a whole, than to follow the vagaries of successive Spanish governments—an almost impossible task if one has only eleven brief chapters at one's disposal. We have probably reached the point in Baptist history where an international historical commission must be set to work by the Baptist World Alliance or where any single author must be prepared to submit his manuscript to the scrutiny of Baptists of other lands before it is published. Dr. Robert Torbet found in 1950 that his *History of the Baptists*, though confined in the main to factual material and based on very wide reading, contained a number of points which needed correction. Though it has had a deservedly wide circulation it cannot be regarded as an altogether satisfactory record.

By and large Dr. Hughey may be said to have succeeded admirably in his quite different task. In the earlier chapters of his book he describes the nature of the Church, the rite of baptism, polity and ministry, evangelism and worship, as most Baptists see and practise these things. He frankly admits that not all Baptists believe

or act in the same way, but bases himself mainly on the expositions of Baptist principles by E. Y. Mullins and W. O. Carver.

There follows a group of historical chapters, one on our seven-teen century origins, one on epochs of British Baptist development, a parallel one on American Baptists, and finally one on our world wide fellowship. The last two chapters deal with Baptists and religious liberty and Baptists and the Ecumenical Movement. Useful appendices contain statistics; the confession of Faith and Constitution adopted by German Baptists in 1847 (McGlothlin gives an English translation of the 1908 edition of this document); and the important 1944 Confession of Faith of the Union of German Evangelical Free Churches (the Union embracing Baptists and Plymouth Brethren).

The references to Russian Baptists, based on an article in *The Fraternal* by Alexander Karev, are to be welcomed, but they make all the more regrettable the absence of information about Baptists in other "Iron Curtain" countries, in the lands of the British Commonwealth, and in parts of Africa like Angola. The brief references to the Baptist Union (p. 50) and the Baptist World Alliance (p. 113) are hardly adequate even in a work of this size, and it is particularly strange to find no mention of the relief work of the Alliance. The ruling of Dr. Tinsley at the Copenhagen Congress in 1947 regarding the World Council of Churches and the B.W.A. is given an unfortunate twist (p. 139). What was said, on the basis of the constitutions of both bodies, was that no directive to the Alliance or to member unions *either* for or against would be in order. But the special consultative relationship of world confessional bodies to the W.C.C. deserves mention, for the B.W.A. has rightly taken advantage of it.

It is hardly to be expected that the ill-fated Sierra Leone venture of the B.M.S. should have a place in these pages, but it must not be claimed that Baptist Missionary history in Africa begins with Lott Carey (p. 110). An English reader also finds it strange to see no mention of William Knibb and the Baptist part in the struggle against slavery. Was Oncken ever in America, as is asserted on (p. 57) and why refer, as is done on (p. 106), to the support he received from the United States, while ignoring the close connection of Britain with the beginnings of modern Baptist witness on the continent of Europe? To describe Clifford and Spurgeon as differing as the "night from the day" (p. 86) is to supply an unfortunate and misleading metaphor, however unlike they were.

But these are minor matters, which can easily be corrected in the next printing of this interesting book, which should be useful outside as well as within the denomination.

ERNEST A. PAYNE

The Gospels, Their Origin and Their Growth, by Frederick C. Grant. (Faber & Faber, 21s.)

There have not been lacking in recent years books giving brief accounts of the origin and nature of the Gospels; but the majority have tended to be popular, having in view, we suspect, more particularly the needs of teachers of divinity in schools. Here is a more extended treatment of the subject by a master in the field. It is well written and can be used alike by lay and theological students and ministers.

The reader is made to feel from the start the impact of form criticism on the study of the Gospels, though undue claims are not advanced on its behalf, since it is acknowledged that literary criticism is as much needed as ever. But the point is stressed that the Gospels are "social products", not simply individual creations, recording traditions of the many rather than the few. They are "Church books", i.e. "written by members of the church, for reading within the church, to meet the needs of the church; they both presupposed and also made use of the traditions, the ideas, the language, and the doctrines of the church"; hence they differ from the products of literary movements and schools of philosophy. In his persistent stress on the nature of the Gospels as creations of the Church, the writer could perhaps have mentioned the complementary point that the Church is itself the product of the Gospel in the Gospels; she is servant of the Gospel as well as giver of the Gospels, a not insignificant distinction to make in these days.

Much attention is paid to the Gospel of Mark. It is agreed that in the compilation of his book the evangelist used primitive Christian handbooks of apologetics, collections of scripture proof texts, of anti-Jewish polemics, of ethical counsels to disciples: "The facts of Marcan order and arrangement speak for themselves; and some hypothesis of this nature seems to be all but inevitable". The structure and contents of Mark and the sources used are fully treated; this section is perhaps the most valuable one in the book.

A cautious attachment to the Proto-Luke theory is advanced: "The most probable view is that L represents 'the contents of Luke's notebook', and that he had already amplified his 'copy' of Q by the addition of this L material before he began combining Q and Mark to form his first volume". The apologetic motive in Acts is traced in the third Gospel also, while the "we" passages are thought to reflect a careless lapse in recounting personal recollections rather than a written diary.

Matthew is held to reflect the conditions existing between the fall of the Temple and the revolt under Bar-Cochba, most particularly the period just prior to the latter event. The attempt to demon-

strate this date by the apocalypticism of Matthew is not very successful.

Without doubt Dr. Grant has left his giddiest wine till last, in his treatment of the Four Gospel. In his concern rightly to evaluate the Hellenistic elements in this Gospel he has unduly minimised the Hebraic. The Semitic 'tone' of the Gospel is said to be debatable, and it is affirmed, "No Palestinian Jewish writer could have produced this book. For it abandons not only the form and in large measure the dominant ideas of Jesus' own teaching, but also those of contemporary Judaism". The parallels adduced from the Qumran literature are regarded as a mere drop in the bucket compared with those from Hellenistic mysticism; Jesus here wears the garb of a Hellenistic mystagogue, being delineated not on the plane of history but in a "religious mystery drama brought down to earth and forced to make terms with a tradition—not extensive or exhaustive—of the kind that underlies the earlier Gospel of Mark". It does injustice to the author's treatment of the Fourth Gospel to summarise so briefly, but it is surprising at this date that an eminent scholar can so cavalierly dismiss the Jewish elements in the Fourth Gospel (the Gospel in which the Rabbinical scholar Israel Abrahams felt most at home) and so completely deny its author's interest in history.

That perhaps, indicates the necessity of the student to exercise his critical capacity to the full when reading this work and to compare its findings with those in other similar works. The author would doubtless approve so diligent a use of it! And the student will be well rewarded.

G. R. BEASLEY-MURRAY

The Amplified New Testament, Sixth American Edition, First British Edition. (Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Michigan; Marshall, Morgan & Scott, London, 25s.)

This work is commended by Billy Graham as 'the most wonderful translation' of the New Testament, and it is said to have had remarkable sales in the United States, where it has gone through six editions before appearing in this British edition. As its title indicates it is more than a translation. The area of meaning of a word in one language is rarely quite the same as the area of meaning of any one term in another language, and every translator must recognize this, and choose the word which will most nearly convey to his readers the impression intended by the writer. Many modern translators of the Bible have done this with great skill, though all are aware of the difficulties. In this edition of the New Testament two or three different words are frequently used to render one word in the effort to bring out all the fullness of meaning of the original:

By various signs the reader is warned when a word is being rendered more than once. Moreover, comments are frequently inserted into the text, where they cannot legitimately be regarded as in any sense translations of the Greek. The result is that we have the impression of the sort of running commentary with which some preachers intersperse the reading of the Scriptures. The author of this 'translation', F. E. Siewert, has used scholarly tools in the form of the best dictionaries, and has consulted many translations of the New Testament. He indicates in the footnotes where he has taken over a rendering from Luther or Calvin or some other commentator or translator, so that a great deal of information is packed into this work. It is in many respects praiseworthy. Nevertheless, it makes a curious impression on the reader, as a few examples may make clear.

John i:9 is rendered: 'There it was; the true Light [was then] coming into the world—the genuine, perfect, steadfast Light—that illumines every person.' Here the parenthesis supplies the sort of comment that any intelligent reader could supply for himself, and the rendering lacks the grace of the Revised Standard Version, 'The true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world', which really says all that this clumsy version says. Or again, *John* xv:2: 'Any branch in Me that does not bear fruit—that stops bearing—He cuts away (trims off, takes away). And He cleanses *and* repeatedly prunes every branch that continues to bear fruit, to make it bear more *and* richer *and* more excellent fruit'. The additional verbiage here contributes nothing to the simply clarity of the verse. Translation and comment are interwoven in *Rom.* viii:3: 'For God has done what the Law could not do [its power] being weakened by the flesh [that is, the entire nature of man without the Holy Spirit]. Sending His own Son in the guise of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin [God] condemned sin in the flesh—subdued, overcame, deprived it of its power [over all who accept that sacrifice].' How many readers would fail to understand *Phil.* ii:4 f. without the expansions: 'Let each of you esteem *and* look upon *and* be concerned for not [merely] his own interests, but also each for the interests of others. Let this same attitude *and* purpose *and* [humble] mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus—Let Him be your example in humility'? The simple beauty of *Rev.* vii:5 gains little from the rendering: 'For this reason they are [now] before the [very] throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His (temple) sanctuary; and He Who is sitting upon the throne will protect *and* spread His tabernacle over *and* shelter them with His presence.'

Many more examples might be given, but these will suffice to indicate the method here used. Some of the additions are need-

less expansions; some are useful comments which would more appropriately be given at the foot of the page as comments. Every translation is an interpretation, and must in a sense be a commentary. Yet every translator should be careful to keep as separate as possible translation and commentary. Hence while the reviewer would not harshly dismiss Mr. Siewert's work, and appreciates his endeavour to make the meaning of the New Testament clear, he frequently feels that it achieves the effect of painting the lily.

H. H. ROWLEY

BOOKS RECEIVED

(Mention here neither implies nor precludes subsequent review)

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N. Micklem, *You Ought to be a Christian*. 15 pp., 8d.

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Seventh Day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine. 720 pp., no price.

FROM American Sabbath Tract Society, Plainfield, N.J.
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