

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](https://paypal.me/robbradshaw)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Baptist Quarterly* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bq_01.php

Reviews

On Selfhood and Godhood, by C. A. Campbell. (George Allen & Unwin, 35s.).

Professor Campbell, who holds the Chair of Logic and Rhetoric at Glasgow, delivered the Gifford Lectures in 1953-54 and 1954-1955. They have been revised and enlarged for publication. Professor Campbell tells us that he has "assumed throughout that the clientele whom Lord Gifford had in mind neither needs nor desires philosophy of the 'processed' variety; and I have made no attempt to 'write down'." He has, however, succeeded in writing in a clear and readable style and, though the matters which he discusses are often difficult, the attentive reader will not have difficulty in grasping his meaning.

The author's thought is out of the main stream of contemporary philosophy. He refers to empiricism and linguisticism as "twin gods" to which he has found it impossible to bow down, and he thinks that they "seldom if ever can take us to the heart of the matter." This, in the preface, will strongly prejudice some readers against him before they start upon the main part of the book, and will, no doubt, prejudice others equally strongly in his favour.

The work is in two parts, corresponding to the two subjects in the title. In the first, Professor Campbell discusses the rôle of reason vis à vis revelation, the essence of cognition, self-consciousness, self-activity, free will and moral experience. In the second, he deals with religion and theism, theism and the problems of sin and suffering, whether rational theism is self-contradictory, supra-rational theism, and the objective validity of religion.

He starts from what he takes to be the main business of natural theology: "How much of certain or probable knowledge is obtainable, on grounds which approve themselves to reason, concerning the existence of God; and, in the event of an affirmative answer to the question of God's existence, concerning His nature, and His relationship to the world and to the human soul." His conclusions are that "objective philosophical thinking" leads to belief in an infinite and eternal being, the creator of the temporal world, and the source of the moral law. He does not think that it can either

sustain or refute the general principle of specific Divine manifestations in human lives, and can only assess roughly the probabilities one way or the other in the case of individual claims.

If one were to say that this book, for all its references to contemporary studies, seems to belong to a previous philosophical generation, the author would apparently regard this as a commendation rather than a criticism. He declares himself to be "totally unpersuaded of the virtues of the 'new look' in philosophy." Professor Campbell hopes that he will be read by some of a different persuasion. If they regard religion as a matter to be taken seriously, they will not read his book without profit.

W. D. HUDSON

History and Eschatology, by D. Rudolph Bultmann. (Edinburgh University Press, 15s.).

In his Gifford Lectures Bultmann has set out to clarify his thoughts on the nature and meaning of history, and on this account alone they are to be welcomed. He presents his views against the background of a critical survey of the leading thinkers and relates them to his eschatological doctrine. His final position is in line with his now familiar existentialist interpretation of the Christian faith.

English readers will be interested to note that he find himself in close sympathy with the position of R. G. Collingwood as developed in his notable posthumous volume *The Idea of History*. Many will concur in the view that this book contains "the best that is said about the problems of history." Bultmann's position, it may be said, is basically Collingwood's transposed into his own philosophical key. According to Collingwood, the knowledge of history is "the self-knowledge of the historian's own mind as the present revival and re-living of past experiences. . . . By understanding it (the past) historically we incorporate it into our present thought, and enable ourselves by developing and criticising it to use that heritage for our own advancement. . . . The historian's thought must spring from the organic unity of his total experience, and be a function of his entire personality with its practical as well as its theoretical interests." This Bultmann translates into his own idiom by saying that "historical knowledge is 'existential' knowledge." Furthermore, according to Collingwood, "history is for human self-knowledge . . . it teaches us what man has done and thus what man is. . . . Man is essentially mind." But since Collingwood means by mind will as well as reason, Bultmann is able to say "that Collingwood conceives thought not as a mere act of thinking, but as an act of man in his entire existence, as an act of decision." This means, in other words, "living in responsibility over against the future and therefore in decision."

Bultmann is now able to make the transition to his own brand of eschatology. "For Collingwood," he says, "every present moment is an eschatological moment . . . history and eschatology are identified." The field is now set for bringing out the significance of the Christian faith. "*The meaning in history lies always in the present*, and when the present is conceived as the eschatological present by Christian faith the meaning in history is realised." "Jesus Christ is the eschatological event not as an established fact of past time but as repeatedly present, as addressing you and me here and now in preaching." Preaching calls for decision, and decision means "a new understanding of myself as free from myself by the grace of God and as endowed with my new self." "The believer lives from the future; first, because his faith and his freedom can never be in possession; . . . secondly, because the believer remains within history." This is, Bultmann maintains, the essential content of New Testament thought after the fading of the early expectation of the Parousia. We find it in the later Paul, although he never abandoned the apocalyptic picture of the future: "The reign of God," he says, "is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." It is still more radically developed in Johannine thought. "The resurrection of the dead and the last judgement are present in the coming of Jesus" (cf. *John* 11 : 25f. ; 9 : 39), so that eternal life, although its perfecting lies elsewhere, may be already a present possession.

For the individual, Bultmann's existentialist interpretation of the significance of history carries an important message. There is profound truth in the dictum: "Every instant has the possibility of being an eschatological instant and in the Christian faith this possibility is realized." But we are left wondering what is the significance of history as a whole. The clue to its meaning and ultimate goal lies in what the Incarnate Son of God enacted on the plane of history. But Bultmann cannot give us this clue because he has taken Jesus Christ out of history by making of Him little more than an existentialist symbol. Both the first and the second Advent belong much more deeply to history than Bultmann supposes, as the New Testament itself bears witness.

W. E. HOUGH

Exploring the Library: an Introduction to the Literature of the Bible, by Norman Goodall. (Independent Press, 2s. 6d.).

Dr. Goodall's book is a quite elementary and popular survey of the literature of the Bible. His scheme is somewhat unusual, for he deals first with the New Testament and then passes to "The Library Jesus used." The treatment is fresh and interesting, and the little book could be of service in Bible classes for young folk.

W. S. DAVIES

Mission Fields Today—A Brief World Survey. Ed. A. J. Dain. (Inter-Varsity Fellowship, 4s.).

This is an interesting and very useful handbook to Christian Missions. Most of us, however, well versed in the details of our own B.M.S., have a very limited acquaintance with other Missions and other fields. Mr. Dain has given us a good guide, not only to Christian work achieved and projected, but to the particular problems and difficulties facing the Christian missionaries in various parts of the world. Interspersed in the text are tables of statistics for every country which help one to a broad picture of the Christian situation and at the same time emphasize the challenge facing the Christian Church. This is a book to be commended to the missionary enthusiast.

The Call and the Work, by Leslie J. Tizard. (Independent Press, 1s. 6d.).

This pamphlet, well written and attractively produced, deals with the problem of the vocation of the Christian ministry. It avoids the sentimentality which so often attaches to this theme, and offers much valuable and commonsense advice to would-be ministers. The nature of the "call," the special gifts expected in a minister, and different aspects of ministerial work in the Church and in the wider community—these are the main points of Mr. Tizard's treatment. Apart from the chapter which deals with "Ways and Means"—intended for entrants to the Congregational ministry—the pamphlet could not fail to be of value in any of the Free Churches.

W. S. DAVIES

A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian Literature. Translated and edited by William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich. (Cambridge University Press, £5 5s.).

Here is an occasion when a reviewer can only write in terms of superlatives, with enthusiasm and gratitude for what must become a great boon to students of the New Testament. This is a magnificent piece of work which is likely to be for long the outstanding lexicon for early Christian literature.

Lexicons and dictionaries, however valuable their contents, are not always inviting in appearance. Here, however, we have a book which is a joy to look at and to handle, a beautiful production in a type clear and easy upon the eyes.

Its publication has been made possible by the Missouri Synod of the Lutheran Church. From a Centenary Thank-Offering Fund a sum was set aside as a fund for scholarly research, of which this

lexicon is the fruit. Its antecedents are of the first water, for it is in large part a translation of the fourth edition of Walter Bauer's famous Greek-German Lexicon, with a number of additions and adaptations, and with references brought up to date. It includes Walter Bauer's fine "Introduction to the Lexicon of the Greek New Testament," from the second edition of the original work.

This is not merely a lexicon; it is a theological word-book of the highest value, with the history of major New Testament words arranged in lucid and stimulating form. Half an hour with a New Testament and this lexicon is sufficient to establish its worth, not only for the experienced student of the New Testament, but also for the beginner, even to the extent of guiding him in the matter of irregular verb forms. Not the least part of its value is the great range of its references, not only, as one can expect, to earlier sources, but also to books and articles almost to the year of its publication.

At first sight the price of the book may look formidable, but never will five guineas be better spent by the student, who would be well advised to refrain from further expenditure on books until this sum has been set aside. For this is a simply invaluable companion to the New Testament.

W. S. DAVIES

Selected Speeches, 1948-1955. H.R.H. The Prince Philip. (Oxford University Press, 12s. 6d.).

The contents of this book consist for the most part of short speeches made by Prince Philip on a variety of public occasions, though several extended addresses and lectures are also included. They form a striking collection. Few speakers could hope to deal from personal knowledge with all the topics represented in this book. For example, within less than a month, the Prince re-named a new schooner for the Outward Bound School, addressed the Convocation of the Royal College of Art, opened the new Mycological Institute of the Commonwealth Agricultural Bureaux, visited the Gordon Boys' School at Woking, and addressed a Conference of European University Heads. Yet whatever briefing may have been supplied to Prince Philip, his speeches show that he was never a slave to it, but succeeded in imparting to each utterance something of his own personal quality. The resultant picture is of a modest and attractive personality with high standards, an observant eye for facts, and a shrewd and independent judgement, agreeably combined with practical good sense and quiet humour. That Queen Elizabeth's Consort is a man of this calibre is something for which the nation has every reason to be profoundly thankful.

R. L. CHILD

The Religious Philosophy of Dean Mansel, by W. R. Matthews. (Oxford University Press, 3s. 6d.). (Friends of Dr. Williams's Library, 10th Lecture).

Dr. Matthews, in this lecture, has rendered a valuable service in recalling attention to the thought of his predecessor. Mansel's Bampton Lectures on "The Limits of Religious Thought Examined" were delivered in 1858, but, as Dr. Matthews points out, the epistemological problem which he has considered is that which logical empiricism has thrust anew upon philosophical theologians in our own day: what meaning do religious statements have and how can they be verified? Mansel's answer is surprisingly up to date. He rejected both dogmatism (forcing reason to conform to revelation) and rationalism (forcing revelation into agreement with reason). To have any conception of God, the Infinite and Unconditioned, we should have to distinguish Him from something else and that, by the terms, is excluded. Mansel went so far as to say that the impossibility of conceiving space or time as finite compels us to regard the infinite as real (a dubious point), but saw that reason cannot make any other assertion about it. Our only guide is revelation. In this connection, Dr. Matthews calls our attention to interesting features of Mansel's thought, e.g. "regulative ideas" and "moral miracles." And he raises the pertinent question: What place can be found in this kind of religious thought for a revelational fact?

Sir Robert Walpole, Samuel Holden, and the Dissenting Deputies, by N. C. Hunt. (Oxford University Press, 4s.). (Friends of Dr. Williams's Library, 11th Lecture).

In this lecture, Dr. Hunt discusses an interesting piece of Non-conformist history: the activities of the Dissenting Deputies' committee, formed to promote the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, between 1732 and 1736. Holden, its chairman, was a director of the Bank of England, and in close touch with Walpole. The latter would have been gravely embarrassed by any vigorous pressure from Dissenters at that time, and Dr. Hunt considers the suggestion that Holden and other wealthy members of his committee deliberately betrayed Dissent under instructions from the wily Walpole. He gives convincing reasons for rejecting this suggestion. His lecture is well-documented and has every mark of competence. It is not, however, a dry piece of specialism, but makes fascinating reading for anyone interested in eighteenth-century Non-conformity.

W. D. HUDSON