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## BOOK NOTICES

*The Liturgical Movement and Methodism*, by Raymond J. Billington.  
(Epworth Press, pp. xiv. 217, 40s.)

This book is a timely one, packed with interesting and relevant material. The Liturgical Movement, which aims at placing the Lord's Supper at the centre of our worship, has, by all the tokens, come to stay, though, as the author reminds us, the Liturgy is set forth by Word as well as by Sacrament. He gives a brief sketch of the history of the Holy Communion service, noting the various interpretations of the Reformers (Luther, Calvin and the rest) and of the variations found in the Church of England rite and those of the Puritans. He then passes on to the emergence of the Liturgical Movement in the nineteenth century and the aspects that it has worn both before and after the second world war.

He comes to the heart of his thesis with a chapter on the implications of Methodism, and, with a wealth of illustration, shows the vital part that the Lord's Supper played in the life of John Wesley from youth to old age. (It is worthy of note that the *Hymns on the Lord's Supper*, which were first published in 1745, were re-published by the Methodist Sacramental Fellowship in 1935.) The author pleads for a much more frequent celebration in our churches, and gives one or two orders (including the Taizé office) which might usefully be adopted for our use. No mention, however, is made of our own *Sunday Service* (issued under the auspices of Conference), which would be more in keeping with our traditions.

One or two utterances may be called into question. Paul van Buren is quoted with approval as saying that "the mission of the Church is not the way of trying to make others into Christians" (p. 105), which is a strange commentary on our Lord's command "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations" (Matthew xxviii. 19). He tells us that the inadequacy of humanism lies in its ignoring the fact of sin (p. 107), yet he disparages the use of the hymn "When I survey the wondrous Cross", and regards Billy Graham's methods of producing a feeling of guilt as artificial (p. 61). He has some further derogatory remarks about the Billy Graham method of evangelism when he says that the evangelism of the Order of Christian Witness has an honesty of approach to the people which the former does not possess (p. 140). Is this fair? More serious still is his desire to get rid of the Covenant Service because of its individual emphasis. Surely the personal aspect of religion cannot be eradicated in this fashion: the fact that it is vitally linked to the Lord's Supper proves its corporate aspect as well. It is not without significance that the Anglican Church is wanting to adopt it (p. 145).

The author will have to do some more thinking on the place of music in worship, especially when he talks about the positioning of the choir and the desirability of using a clarinet to accompany some of the hymns. Nevertheless, one can be grateful for the provocative challenge of the treatise and for the insights that it contains.

FRANCIS B. WESTBROOK.

*Methodist Plans for a Mission in Madagascar*, [1816-28]. (Article by J. T. Hardyman.)

A little while ago there appeared in a national paper an article by a well-known clergyman under the title "The Failure of a Mission". Some readers wondered whether such a title could ever be justified theologically,

whatever the facts. If ever it *could* be justified, perhaps the Methodist attempt at a mission in Madagascar might be thought to qualify for such a description.

The events are related in an article, "Methodist Plans for a Mission in Madagascar", written (in English) by J. T. Hardyman, and published in *Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft*, volume XXV (1969). Mr. Hardyman is himself a missionary of the London Missionary Society working in Madagascar. He is an acknowledged authority, with a wide knowledge of the history of missionary activity there, and we welcome this competent presentation of facts that are not well enough known.

The paper, which can be seen in the reference library at the Mission House, 25, Marylebone Road, London, N.W. 1, is one of a series of detailed preliminary studies of plans made for Madagascar by various Christian bodies during the period 1795 to 1825 or so. These, it is hoped, are preparing the way for a comprehensive history. The article under review is a worthy piece of such a jig-saw puzzle. Not surprisingly, the writer finds some difficulty in believing that the term "Calvinistic Welsh Methodist" is not a figment of some feeble theological mind, but he shows a clear grasp of the situation and characters in this fascinating story.

Inevitably, much comes into the account about the LMS, who in the period 1816 to 1828 were at work in Madagascar, and are there still. It is interesting to see how the two societies reacted on each other, and how, at that early stage, they approached, with courtesy and common sense, the question of comity.

A further issue which, as Hardyman shows, is raised by the story of Threlfall's intense sense of call to work in Madagascar, and the way his missionary vocation actually worked out, is why the Methodist Missionary Society did not allow him to found a faith mission, paying his own fare and supporting himself at the other end. The answer, of course, lies in the fact that the Methodist ministry is an Order. This also is the answer to the question Hardyman raises as to whether the more normal (from a Methodist point of view) calls and appointments of other missionaries at that time—and of course since—were a little "flat" by comparison with Threlfall's passionate desire to serve in this one place.

We must all agree with Hardyman that Threlfall's devotion is still intensely moving and inspiring. To read the facts, simply and clearly related as they are in this article, is to know that to talk in this connexion about the failure of a mission because Methodism never managed to land one of its missionaries on the island of Madagascar is to miss the whole significance of Threlfall's dedicated life.

N. ALLEN BIRTHWISTLE.

*The Planting of Christianity in Yorubaland, 1842-1888*, by Modupe Oduyoye. (Daystar Press, Ibadan, Nigeria, pp. 77, 3s.)

This study is based on a careful reading of most of the available secondary sources. It is of interest to readers of this journal for two reasons: firstly, for its examination of the interaction of Wesleyan and other (especially CMS) missionary work, and secondly, for its balanced assessment, from an African standpoint, of the divergent personalities and writings of missionaries, African Christians, missionary statesmen such as Henry Venn, and hostile witnesses such as Richard Burton. Slips are very few: on page 62, for "Bouch" read "Bouche".

PAUL ELLINGWORTH.