

Book Reviews

Dodge, Ralph E. *The Unpopular Missionary*. Westwood, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1964. (\$3.50)

Ralph Dodge has written down with unusual insight and compassionate sympathy expressions of the thinking of young African students about their missionary teachers and preachers.

And there are “anguished cries of concern,” “bitter denunciations of disillusionment.” Too much the church has been involved in the colonial pattern of its history; too long has it harbored the attitudes of segregation of the groups from which it has gone out; too deeply has it been colored by the atmosphere of its time; too widely has it been characterized by the divisions of its world; too thoroughly has it been marked by human weaknesses. Unfortunately—and tragically—it has been a reflection of the world around it. And all this even while it preached brotherhood.

As Bishop Dodge says (page 61), “The *theory* of brotherhood will not remove the stigma of hypocrisy attached to the church; but actual *living* together as brothers will go a long way towards doing so.” And such living has Ralph Dodge done himself in Rhodesia. So much so that when he became “unpopular” with the white dominated government, his African brothers insisted that he be re-elected as their bishop even if for the time being he had to exercise his leadership in the exile to which the government had sentenced him.

One should see in this book not only frank facing of the things that too often have made the missionary “unpopular” and brought the church under fire but as Bishop Dodge said in his preface that this “may be considered a plan of action for the future.”

The reader must not get stopped in the criticisms of the first part—but go on to the contributions of the second part and especially to the concerns of the last section.

In the part on contributions Bishop Dodge writes:

“The church must forcefully reject any insinuation that it has not made any impact upon Africa and has not contributed to the well-being of its people. The church has made mistakes but there is no cause for undue shame.” (page 154)

At the heart of the “plan for the future” is Bishop Dodge’s insistence that immediately there must be Africans in the places of administrative authority. He writes: “There is nothing more important that can be done at this time than to seek the leading of the Holy Spirit in this matter.” (page 132)

To read this book carefully is to be, with Bishop Dodge—and in his words—“hurt deeply” at the “feverish proclamations of resentment”; “amazed” at what missionaries and colleagues “have been able to accomplish at tremendous sacrifice”; and “in anticipating the future of the church in Africa” to become “concerned but not pessimistic—confident in God’s grace.”

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Hall, Gordon Langley. *The Sawdust Trail*. Philadelphia: Macrae Smith Company, 1964. 249 pp. (\$4.50)

The subtitle of this volume indicates that it is the story of American evangelism. It contains brief sketches of twelve evangelists, five of whom were not born in the United States though they worked in this country, some of them very briefly. This reviewer has had some contacts with half of them. The book takes its title from the phrase coined by the late Billy Sunday.

Beginning with John Wesley and George Whitefield, the author gives in popular style an insight into the background of and the compulsions that led these men and women into the field of evangelistic labor.

He tells of "Father" Dyer, who covered 10,000 miles of the Southwest on horseback, during an era when pioneer Americans eagerly awaited the camp-meeting season—the most significant religious movement of its kind in our history.

The work of the Sunday school, from which now come the vast majority of all church members, comes alive in the story of Dwight L. Moody's concern for ragged street boys and his revival among children.

Rodney Smith, the gypsy boy whose mother "was buried at the dead of night"; Billy Sunday, who "crept and crawled out from the university of poverty and hard knocks," and later said that "education if divorced from religion leads to the spread of depravity"; Evangeline Booth, commander of the Salvation Army in the United States for almost half a century; "Sweet Daddy" Grace, founder of the Church of the Rock of Apostolic Faith, with three million followers; Aimee McPherson and the Four-square Gospel; Rheba Crawford, the angel of Broadway and defender of the underprivileged; Father Divine, founder of the worldwide Kingdom of Peace; and Billy Graham, seen and heard by more individuals than any other evangelist in history—all of these are vividly portrayed in Mr. Hall's book.

It is not, of course, a real history of evangelism and does not claim to be, since it deals with only a few persons, but it will be found interesting and well written and will repay careful reading.

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Loane, Marcus L. *Makers of Religious Freedom in the Seventeenth Century*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1961. 240 pp. (\$4.00)

Makers of Religious Freedom is a series of four brief biographies dealing with the lives of Samuel Rutherford, Alexander Henderson, John Bunyan and Richard Baxter. Samuel Rutherford and Alexander Henderson were ministers of the Scotch Presbyterian Church, while Bunyan and Baxter were English Puritans, but all four played a large part in winning liberty of conscience for the British Isles. Under the tyranny of the Stuart kings, all four suffered persecution, except for a brief time when Oliver Cromwell was lord protector of England, Scotland

and Ireland. All were placed in grave danger by the Restoration, and the hopes of all were in some measure fulfilled when William of Orange drove James II from the English throne, but only Richard Baxter lived to see this latter event.

Certainly some such book as *Makers of Religious Freedom* was sorely needed, for those of us who enjoy that freedom in the twentieth century are poorer if we do not understand the price at which it was purchased.

Alexander Henderson and Samuel Rutherford are chiefly noted for their work in connection with the National Covenant of 1638, which was signed eagerly throughout Scotland. It was this Covenant which enabled nearly all of the Presbyterian churches of Scotland to stand together instead of being overcome piecemeal by the policies of Charles I, demanding uniformity.

It is sometimes hard to forgive the author for breaking in on a thrilling narrative with information concerning the physical appearance of the principals, but the work is, on the whole, well written.

John Bunyan and Richard Baxter are noted for the impact they had on Puritan thinking in England during roughly the same period when Henderson and Rutherford were active in Scotland. Marcus Loane makes it plain that neither Baxter nor Bunyan took up the cudgel of religious freedom to gain his own personal ends. Rather, each took up the cause somewhat reluctantly, but having once taken it up, neither flattery nor persecution could cause him to lay it down again.

It should be noted that while all four men were thrust into positions of preeminence by the peculiar circumstances of their time, all four would probably have been great religious leaders in any time. For a generation which no longer reads *Pilgrim's Progress* as a matter of course, there is a brief précis of this work in the chapter dealing with Bunyan.

The four biographies included in *Makers of Religious Freedom* are necessarily short and sketchy, averaging about fifty pages in length. This, however, should make the work attractive to the casual reader as well as to the historian; either will find some nuggets of pure gold in these pages. For those who wish to dig more deeply, the ample footnotes and the bibliography at the end of each section will be most helpful.

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A Miscellany of American Christianity: Essays in Honor of H. Shelton Smith, ed. Stuart C. Henry. Durham, N. C.: Duke University Press, 1963. 390 pp. (\$10.00)

This book is a tribute to a distinguished Christian educator. It brings to focus at least three major concerns of Shelton Smith during his career as a professor at Duke University. These are: the study of American Christianity, graduate education in Religion, and the ecumenical spirit. As the title indicates, the essays have to do with various persons and forces in American Christianity. Each, therefore, is an extension of the mind and interest of this gifted teacher of graduate students who have made scholarly studies of the American Scene. The authors come from

different denominations, and this is in keeping with the ecumenical spirit in which Dr. Smith shares so creatively.

There is some variety in the quality of the essays, but as a whole they represent a solid achievement in the study of various aspects of American Christianity. They have to do with everything from the Great Awakening to the Theology of Paul Tillich. They tell of John Witherspoon's call to American freedom through his leadership at Princeton and in government, of Bronson Alcott's intuitionism, of Jonathan Mayhew's rationalism, of the Puritans in relation to witchcraft, etc., etc. They refresh our minds on Bishop McConnell's extraordinary leadership following the Great Steel Strike (of September 22, 1919-January 8, 1920). They even have to do with American church architecture.

The editor and those who assisted him are to be commended on the care with which these varied materials have been brought together. Much remains to be said on each of the topics treated. But what has been done here shows something of what remains to be done. And it is of such a quality as to set high standards for those who are studying the many-sided movements of religion in the United States.

Not the least important part of this volume is Albert Outler's "appreciative memoir" of Shelton Smith which is a masterpiece of accurate portrayal. With some men to portray them as they are is to praise them.

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Paul, Robert S. *The Lord Protector: Religion and Politics in the Life of Oliver Cromwell*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964. (Paper, \$2.95)

Historians will long debate the paradoxical roles and contradictory character of that archetype of Puritanism, Oliver Cromwell. He was seemingly settled for life in the relative obscurity of country living and then thrust into the maelstrom of the religious and parliamentary struggles of the early 17th century, from which he emerged as national leader. He was a man of mercurial moods yet displayed such a resoluteness that he was dubbed "Ironsides." Cromwell displayed great tenderness toward his wife and children but is the inflexible field commander at the Irish massacres of Drogheda and Wexford. He stood against Charles I because of the monarch's autocracy, but as the champion of Independency and as Lord Protector he became more autocratic than the beheaded king.

Dr. Paul offers a fascinating treatment of these and other questions surrounding Cromwell's tempestuous life. The American edition of the biography, originally published by Lutterworth Press, London (1955), fills a need for those who would understand the background of Puritan ideals later to become so important in the development of American democracy. The author combines an excellent narrative style with the finest of scholarship, and the biography makes a worthy addition to the time-honored works of Gardiner, Firth and Hilaire Belloc. The book is adequately indexed and abounds in helpful footnotes which will aid both the student and the casual reader.

Such reading is rewarding for an understanding of human nature as

well as learning about the man Cromwell. Dr. Paul's word picture of the Lord Protector, "warts and all," combines balance and warm sympathy. The strange leadings of Cromwell's faith are explicable because the biographer treats seriously the age of faith in which Cromwell lived rather than seeking to read modern concepts back into that troubled century. Nonetheless our modern notions of political and religious liberty, civil responsibility and abhorrence of tyranny may be traced to the age of Cromwell and his contemporaries.

Moreover, one is led to conclude that Cromwell's chief contributions were other than to the Puritan cause: the strengthening of parliamentary authority, the acceptance of the Instrument of Government, the creation of a standing army, the use of sea power as an instrument of foreign policy, and the union with Scotland. And even though there was the Restoration of 1660 the monarchy was never the same again, for the course of modern England was being set in the century of Cromwell.

A study of the life of Cromwell offers many illustrations as grist for the parish minister's homiletical mill. He reads of the power of faith to transform a man's life, the power of discipline to make action almost irresistible, and the courage to face and force decisive moments. It is this which leads Dr. Paul to portray Cromwell as a colossus of history astride the harbor which opened to the modern world of freedom and discovery, and such he was.

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