Reviews.

Morals and Revelation, by H. D. Lewis. (George Allen & Unwin, 16s.)

For the fundamental insight of the Protestant Neo-Orthodoxy of which Barth, Brunner and Niebuhr are the acknowledged leaders there are few who do not give thanks. But it is all to the good that in many quarters attempts are now being made to re-assess the movement and a number of scholars in the Reformed tradition are putting forward their queries. To some exent, Barth, Brunner and Niebuhr, themselves led the way, for on many significant points they have changed their views and have not been slow to say so. But that they have not changed their opinions sufficiently to satisfy the Professor of Philosophy at University College, Bangor. Professor Lewis has rendered a great service by following his *Morals and the New Theology* with this volume of essays which have been contributed to various learned journals. Approaching the issues from the opposite direction, we may nevertheless endorse Dr. A. C. Ewing's comment in *Mind* that this volume might well be made compulsory reading for all theological students.

It is not surprising that as a philosopher, Professor Lewis is particularly concerned about the disparagement of Reason, so characteristic of some phases of Neo-Protestantism, and the yawning gulf between Reason and Revelation. We may agree with him that something has gone wrong when the philosopher who is a Christian cannot make contact with the theologian of the Church. This state of affairs is disastrous for both philosophy and theology and all honour to those who are trying to remedy it. In some ways, Professor Lewis answers the call Brunner sounded in the late chapters of *Revelation and Reason* when he praised the British tradition as symbolised in the Gifford Lectureship, for this at least encourages philosopher and theologian to wave to each other from the opposite sides of the stream that divides them. To some minor points of criticism put forward in this volume Brunner will undoubtedly say "Yes," but to other weightier criticisms the reply is likely to be that Professor Lewis illustrates the adage that Pelagianism is the besetting sin of British Theology. But the author has put his finger on matters of awful urgency, as when he contends that when civilisation is crumbling the Church is failing to make as plain as she should the ethical content of her message, is unnecessarily alienating men

of goodwill who cannot accept orthodox Christianity yet have the deepest concern for the moral issues now facing mankind and, by setting too rigid bounds to her theology, is encouraging the idea that religion is but one little section of life instead of a light to the whole of life.

Of the questions one would like to ask Professor Lewis, two must here suffice. While his method of taking the utterances of theologians and asking: "Is this true to life" "Is this sort of thing vindicated in experience?" lends reality to abstract discussions, has he not carried the empirical approach too far? Apply this method ruthlessly and even an Apostle Paul cannot open his mouth. Do not many shots fired by the author against the theologian's findings on guilt miss the mark, because the moral judgment and the religious judgment are confused? The Gospel preacher must be ruthless in his attitude towards good works when a man is banking on them to put him right with God, but he must be equally ruthless with the justified man who would argue that good works are valueless. In the Christian revelation Paul and James do hang together; the basic positions of each are to be found in the teaching of Jesus.

KENNETH C. DYKES.

A Survey of Syntax in the Hebrew Old Testament, by J. Wash Watts. (Broadman Press, Nashville, Tennessee, $3.75.)

This is an exposition of the main rules and usage of Hebrew Syntax by the Professor of Old Testament and Hebrew in New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. The treatment is based on the belief that verbal forms and syntactical relationships can be adequately described and understood by an examination of their actual use within the limits, in the case of classical Hebrew, of the Old Testament. As a brief statement, therefore, of the rules of concord, verbal government, and sentence construction the book is of much interest and usefulness. The avoidance of philological discussion, which lends to it a useful brevity and directness, is the trait by which the book will either stand or fall. If the treatment is self-convincing and stands the test of proof in translation, then the details of philological justification can be left aside, but otherwise the arguments require to be built up on a firm foundation based on a study of origins. In any case, the result is one which will invite Hebrew scholars to look once again at their ideas of the Hebrew Tenses. Dr. Watts treats Hebrew as an isolated language without cognates and without parentage. Finding the phenomenon of a perfect tense, the tense of completed action, used sometimes for the past and sometimes

for the future he seeks to show how both past and future significance can belong to the same tense by being correlative. There is, in his view, no separate idiom of the perfect with *waw* consecutive. The use of the perfect with *waw* in passages which have a future reference is explained by the theory of *correlation*, i.e. the perfect with *waw* correlates the direction and tense of the initial antecedent. The phenomenon of the use of an imperfect tense to indicate past time receives a different explanation because in the case of the imperfect, unlike the perfect, there is a distinction in the manner of attaching the *waw*. With the imperfect, therefore, there are two forms of the *waw; waw* conjunctive to subordinate the verb to the main verb, and *waw* consecutive to indicate logical sequence, result, cause or contrast. The imperfect tense is described as being "progressive" and therefore as indicating that which goes on to take place after the initial or main verb has commenced the action.

Apart from philological considerations, it seems to the reviewer that it would have been simpler to have accepted the imperfect with *waw* consecutive just as we *find* it, that is, as a past tense in continuous narrative. and to translate accordingly. That would at least satisfy the desire to treat the form according to its usage. One feels that the author should have given more space to a defence of his rejection of the current theories about the *waw* consecutive idiom which are based on the mixed parentage of the Hebrew language, and at the same time should have said a little more about the problems which his own statements raise. Why. we may ask, is it that "only perfects can be correlated by *waw conjunctive*"? (p. 97). On the same page we read that "all verbs except perfects can be co-ordinated by it" and we wonder why the perfect is so confidently set aside in this way. Moreover, we have already read (on p. 85) that "The relation between the perfects linked by it (the *waw* conjunctive) may be co-ordinate, correlative or collateral.") Recognition of a *waw* consecutive idiom with both tenses is so widespread, and belief that it may have its origin in the mixed parentage of Hebrew so strong, that a very convincing alternative theory will be required to take its place. The book requires a philological supplement in which the claims made can be related to what is known of the origin and history of the tenses.

L. H. BROCKINGTON.

A Book of Festival Services. Compiled by Constance M. Parker. (Independent Press, 5s.)

This book consists of eighteen orders of service for festival occasions, including six for Anniversaries. Suggestions are

offered having regard to the different types of churches that might use them. It should be noted that the reference is to Anniversaries, not to Sunday School Anniversaries, and to the type of church, not the type of Sunday School. This indicates an assumption underlying the presentation of the book. A detailed introductory chapter begins by discussing the purpose of festivals: "There is a great deal of difference between presenting a performance in front of a congregation of interested spectators and a festival service to which every department of the church makes a contribution and in which people of all ages actively share in the worship." For those to whom this approach is new, here is a book whose challenge should be seriously considered. For those to whom it is not new there is much here to encourage further endeavours. Many of the ideas in these pages might well find expression in the religious work and worship of our day schools both primary and modern; certainly the secondary modern schools.

H. GORDON RENSHAW.

The Plain Man's Christ, by D. W. Langridge. (Independent Press, 7s. 6d.)

The central theme here is the greatness of Christ. To this each of the thirty-three brief chapters makes its worthy contribution. The author expounds such well-known Scriptures as the account of the Temptations and the story of the Prodigal Son; he discusses the incarnation, the humanity and divinity of Christ, His passion and resurrection; he portrays His strength, enthusiasm and creative power; he deals with familiar modern difficulties in belief. To this familiar material the author brings a freshness of approach and language of a vigour and directness which spring from a sturdy faith which is not afraid to apply theory and argument to the task of daily living. The reader may not always find the arguments convincing or agree with all that is said, but in every chapter he will find something to stimulate, disturb or inspire.

The Land of Beulah, by A. Pilgrim. (Independent Press, 4s.)

Old age can be bitter to experience and pitiful to witness. This book is written by an old man to help his fellow pilgrims find renewed life in their later years. Old age must have eyes open to its opportunities. Bodily powers weaken, but personality abides. Being more detached from active life provides leisure to know ourselves, our spiritual nature and destiny. Abiding values

can be more clearly seen—above all the evil of self-centredness and the worth of love. The inward man, being renewed by divine grace is fitted for the life which is to be. This book will be helpful to those who in their active life have lived with a measure of detachment from this world. It is somewhat diffuse, however, and lacks the practical guidance in spiritual discipline needed by those who would experience "peace at eventide."

The Touch of Healing, by H. E. Berry. (Independent Press, 9d.)

A useful booklet to put into the hands of a sick person. Scripture portions are aptly chosen, the comments helpful and the prayers brief and pointed.

FRANK BUFFARD.

Melbourne Baptists, by Thos. J. Budge. (Carey Kingsgate Press, 3s. 6d.)

In the small Derbyshire town of Melbourne a witness to Baptist principles—in the General tradition—has been steadfastly borne for two hundred years. In these pages the present minister has outlined the history of the church, which began as an offshoot of Barton-in-the-Beans, owed much to the forty-six years' ministry of its first pastor, Francis Smith, and later played a prominent part in the New Connection. Associated with the church were Abraham Booth, the well-known preacher, J. F. Winks, printer and publisher of denominational magazines, J. H. Wood, historian of the New Connection, and, best known to the world at large, Thomas Cook, of tourist fame. In a small book of some sixty pages much has necessarily been omitted, but Mr. Budge, an obvious enthusiast for Baptist history, has selected wisely and told his story simply and well. An index would have been an advantage.

Richard Baxter and Philip Doddridge, by Geoffrey F. Nuttall. (Oxford University Press, 3s. 6d.)

This is the fifth Dr. Williams Lecture given under the auspices of the "Friends of Dr. Williams's Library." Dr. Nuttall's sub-title, "A Study in a Tradition," indicates his theme, that the form of piety common to Baxter and Doddridge set up a "double tradition of eclectism in theology and deep seriousness in religion." Both men were impatient of divisive doctrines, were concerned for Christian unity and that piety in which the sub-

jective and the objective elements were combined. Baptists will note with interest Dr. Nuttall's suggestion that in this tradition stood Andrew Fuller. This is a scholarly, readable and useful study which we commend to all who are interested in the faith of our fathers.

It's All Yours! by G. W. Rusling. (Carey Kingsgate Press, 1s.)

Written at the request of the Baptist Union Y.P.'s department, this booklet clearly and briefly describes the principles and organisation of Baptists in this country. For the older and more thoughtful young people in our churches it should prove a most useful guide. But if, as the cover design and the foreword suggest, it is 'teen-agers the sponsors had in mind, we fear that for the kind of boy and girl found in the average church youth club something still more simple and pithy and with a more arresting lay-out is required. Nevertheless, Mr. Rusling has been successful in supplying much helpful information and guidance within the limits of a 16 pp. pamphlet.

GRAHAM W. HUGHES.

The Master, by Max Brod. (Philosophical Library, New York, $4.75.).

In this story by the Jewish novelist and historian we are introduced to two young students of philosophy in Athens—Meleager, the Greek poet, and a renegade Jew who turns out to be Judias Iscariot. Meleager eventually reaches Palestine and meets Jesus. His report brings Judas to the scene. The second half of the book describes the impact of Jesus on these two young men. Vivid accounts are given of the background of our Lord's ministry. While the author writes with reverence and presents clearly Christ's teaching concerning the Kingdom of God, he takes many liberties with the setting of the Gospel incidents. His story ends with the crucifixion, which helps to explain why his portrayal of The Master is vague and inconclusive. There is much to be learned from this book and its freshness of approach is stimulating, yet one turns with relief to The Master and we see Him in the pages of the Gospels.

FRANK BUFFARD.