

History and Missions

INTRODUCTION

The theological graduate, as well as the minister in his parish, frequently asks, What are the great books which should occupy the primary place in my library? Though this may appear at first sight to be a simple question, admitting of an easy and straightforward answer, a little investigation will show that the answer is more difficult than it seems. To provide a list in the discipline of Church History is no simple task. Recognizing the possible peril of over-simplification, the writer offers the following as something of a guide.

In the area of Church History and Missions, it is suggested that the minister's library should contain as a minimum sixteen volumes, which may be purchased for a sum not exceeding seventy-five dollars. It is possible, without guidance, to spend this amount in the indiscriminate buying of less significant books, which will bring little addition to the strength and character of the library. In this area, at least, the "standard" works are the most useful.

The first of these is Williston Walker's *A History of the Christian Church*. It has been recognized as a scholarly work in its field for several decades, by both ministers and theological teachers. Revised in 1959 by three eminent scholars in the field of Church History, Cyril C. Richardson, Wilhelm Pauck, and Robert T. Handy, this is an adequate outline and guide to a meaningful study of the Christian Church.

The next eight volumes are Philip Schaff's *History of the Christian Church*. This splendid set represents the careful and lifetime work of a great scholar, who treats his subject matter clearly and concisely. Dr. Schaff has organized an abundance of valuable material, setting it forth accurately and in proper perspective.

The last seven of the sixteen suggested volumes are those produced by one of the very great contemporary church historians. They are Kenneth Scott Latourette's *A History of the Expansion of Christianity*. Professor Latourette has since 1921 occupied the chair of Missions and Oriental History at

Yale University. His work is an excellent and appropriate supplement to the writings of Philip Schaff. There is surprisingly little overlapping of materials by the two authors, since Dr. Latourette deals with the first fifteen centuries in two volumes, and devotes the latter five volumes to the story of Christianity since the Protestant Reformation, at which point Schaff had concluded his study. As the title suggests, Dr. Latourette's series contains a record of the expansion of Christianity, with special reference to the great modern missionary advance since the time of William Carey.

There are, to be sure, other volumes in the field which are significant in improving our understanding of the nature of the Church and of the purpose of God in history. However, we have suggested the above sixteen works as essential to the core of the minister's holdings in the field of Church History.

General Histories

History of the Christian Church, by Philip Schaff. 8 vols. New York: Scribners, 1910. (Eerdmans, \$6.00 per volume, \$45.00 the set.)

The first volume of this series appeared in 1858 and dealt with only the first three centuries of Christian history. The completion of the eight volumes covering the story of Christianity through the Protestant Reformation represents the work of a lifetime of painstaking scholarship by the author.

In composing this very complete story of the Church up to the sixteenth century, the author has evidenced a fine scholarship and at the same time has written with keen understanding and satisfying simplicity. As a reference work in the general field of Christian history, it is unsurpassed for the student, teacher, pastor, or any other specialist in this area of historical interest. Fortunately, this work has been reprinted by the William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1960, and is now available at a very reasonable cost.

A History of the Christian Church, by Williston Walker. New York: Scribner's, 1959. 585 pages. \$6.75.

This is among the best standard texts on Church History by a competent scholar, progressive theologian, and reliable historian. Since its original publication in 1918, it seems to have maintained the high respect of scholars among the most representative institutions.

Its recent revision (1959) has been done by Professors Cyril C. Richardson, Wilhelm Pauck, and Robert T. Handy. The revisors have retained the main structure of the original. Several new sections have been added in order to take advantage of recent historical information, such as the relevance of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Essenes. Also, sections have been added to deal with mid-twentieth century developments, including such subjects as: modern Roman Catholicism, the Eastern Churches in Modern Times, and The Ecumenical Movement.

A History of the Expansion of Christianity, by Kenneth Scott Latourette. 7 vols., New York: Harper and Brothers, 1937. (\$6.00 per vol., \$37.50 the set.)

Certainly Professor Latourette is one of the greatest missionary scholars of the twentieth century. This work of seven volumes represents one of the greatest achievements of a great and dedicated life. The emphasis, as the title suggests, is upon the expansion of Christianity in the era of modern missions. It is, therefore, a basic study in modern world evangelization. The balance of treatment indicates something of the general purpose of the author. The first volume covers the first five centuries, the second outlines the Christian story of a thousand years--"a thousand years of uncertainty," the third, a period of three centuries of advance (1500-1800). But the great burden and concern is with the Church during the last century and a half (1800-1950). The growth and expansion of the Christian faith among so many peoples and nations of the world since the advent of William Carey and modern world missions is the greatest strength of these informative volumes.

Special Topics

Christianity in the Apostolic Age, by George T. Purves. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1955. \$3.00.

This concise volume, originally published by Scribners in 1900, is by a thoroughly devout and scholarly Princeton professor of New Testament literature and exegesis. Though well aware of the currents of scholarly opinion, he recognized the Scriptures themselves as nearly the only source of our knowledge of Christianity in the apostolic age. His analysis of these materials is so complete and incisive that the book is as useful today as when first written. After a penetrating treatment of the resurrection of Jesus, he traces the rise of Christianity in Jerusalem through its early expansion, analyzes Judaic Christianity, studies the nature and effect of Paul's ministry, and observes the changes and developments that brought the church to independence and maturity by the end of the century.

The Greek and Eastern Churches, by Walter F. Adeney. New York: Scribner's, 1908. 626 pages.

The story of the Church in the East is a branch of the development of Christianity which is too often passed over rather lightly by the theological student. Unfortunately, an adequate emphasis upon this phase of the life and growth of the Church is seldom made. Therefore, the story here told by Adeney though briefly, but accurately, becomes an important instrument for the minister's library. Especially in these days of world Christianity and ecumenical advance, the leadership of the Church should have a larger understanding and appreciation of the thought and life of our brethren who carried the faith to the East.

The Pressure of Our Common Calling, by W. A. Visser 'T Hooft. Garden City, New Jersey: Doubleday, 1959. \$2.50.

This is one of the great little works in the field of ecumenical literature of recent years. Emphasis is made upon the supposition that growth can be accomplished in Christian unity. The Church must assume this obligation for normal growth in this as a part of the grace of God. The author declares that unity grows as churches take seriously their common calling to witness. The sound exegesis of Scripture which is used in supporting the thesis presents a very great challenge to the Christian believer. The several chapters deal with the call to witness, to service, to fellowship, and to unity in Christ.

A Source Book for Ancient Church History, by Joseph Cullen Ayer, Jr. New York: Scribners, 1949. 697 pages. \$6.75.

Here is a one-volume work which performs a big task. In a relatively small compass, Dean Ayer has presented the thought and teaching of the Church from the apostolic age to the close of the conciliar period. For the most part, it is the heart of the teaching of the most representative apostles and early church fathers. Though the materials are carefully and properly well-organized the churches of these early generations are allowed to speak for themselves. The evaluation and comment by the author is kept at a minimum. Thus, except that the writings are in translation, the work may be looked upon as original material. Few other works as short as this are apt to serve so well in presenting the spirit, thought, and character of the ancient church.

Christian Missions

Philosophy and Principle

God's Mission--and Ours, by Eugene L. Smith. Nashville: Abingdon, 1961. \$3.25.

Dr. Eugene L. Smith, General Secretary, Division of World Missions of The Methodist Church, with keen insight surveys the state of missions as they presently exist. Both ministers and laymen will find historical and theological dimensions of missions given full play in this account of the problems that confront Christian missions in the twentieth century.

With the living Christ as the basis and motive for all missions, the author discusses such questions as: Are missions essential to the life of the church? What happens when churches neglect mission work? What is the real source of power in the Christian mission? What problems must be faced due to the conflicts that exist between Western and primitive cultures? Do we weaken our witness to other peoples by neglecting such aspects of the Christian gospel as faith healing and the work of the Holy Spirit?

An Introduction to the Science of Missions, by J. H. Bavinck. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960. (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Press, \$4.95.)

This is a translation from the original Dutch version which appeared in 1954. The author has for two decades been a missionary in Indonesia, and then for two decades professor of missions in Amsterdam.

Considered by some as "*the* text-book on missions of this generation," this book is a survey text in the tradition of continental learning. It is thorough and balanced, yet inspiring to read. The work is particularly rich in the biblical theological background of missions, but also deals fully with such subjects as the principles of missionary approach, the ultimate aim of missions, the significance of the Holy Spirit in missions, and the place and task of the history of missions.

Message and Missions, by Eugene A. Nida. New York: Harper's, 1960. \$5.00.

The author, Executive Secretary of the American Bible Society, presents a thorough study of the means and methods which best communicate the Christian message to peoples of diverse backgrounds. A well-known specialist in linguistics, anthropology, and the interpretation of the Christian faith, Dr. Nida is uniquely equipped to write this book.

Dr. Nida first gives the reader a fascinating introduction into the general problems of communication which are common to all mankind. He then describes the basic problems of meaning which so often lead to a failure of communication. He points out how missionaries can use the latest techniques and insights gained in such varied disciplines as anthropology, linguistics, psychology, and theology.

Missionary Principles and Practice, by Harold Lindsell. Westwood, N. J.: Revell, 1955. \$5.00.

This work is designed as a text for the basic course in missions offered by most Bible institutes and seminaries. Harold Lindsell has served as dean of administration and professor of missions at Fuller Theological Seminary for a number of years.

Entire chapters are devoted to the missionary motive and imperative, the call and preparation for foreign service, and the choice and selection of capable personnel. Included are informative sections concerning the various boards and societies and other elements in missionary administration, as well as facts on the missionary's spiritual life and finances, adjustments on the field, the importance of the local pastor, and other pertinent matters. Here, too, is an evaluation of the "Big Four" in mission work--evangelism, education, medicine, and literacy--and a well-thought-out discussion of missions today and the role they will play in the years to come.

The Philosophy of the Christian World Mission, by Edmund D. Soper. New York: Abingdon, 1943. \$3.00.

In this book Dr. Edmund D. Soper, for many years professor of missions and comparative religions in several universities and theological seminaries, seeks to answer such fundamental questions as, Is there an adequate biblical basis for the Christian mission? What is the function of missions among primitive peoples; in an indigenous culture; in a developed culture; and in the modern world: What are the motives behind the missionary movement? How does Christianity approach the non-Christian? In what ways is Christianity superior? How shall missions meet nationalism?

Dr. Soper discusses and answers these and other pertinent questions with decisive clarity. This book remains as a representative exposition of the viewpoint held by a large segment of American Protestantism.

The Progress of World-Wide Missions, by Robert Hall Glover. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960. \$5.50.

This is a recent edition of the original work, first published in 1924, now revised, enlarged, and brought up to date by J. Herbert Kane. Over 90 per cent of all the Bible institutes and colleges in the United States and Canada use this book as the main text in their history of missions courses.

The writer traces briefly the rise and development of Christian Missions from the period of the Early Church to the period of the Reformation, and then gives in detail the world-

wide extension of the Church, area by area and country by country, during the period of "modern mission" (beginning with William Carey in 1792).

Theology of Christian Missions

The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World, by Hendrik Kraemer. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 1956. \$4.95.

This is the third edition of the work first written for the meeting of the International Missionary Council held at Tambaram (Madras), India, in 1938, by Hendrik Kraemer, who was first a missionary to the East Indies, and then professor of the history of religions at the University of Leiden. The book is a fundamental exposition of the evangelical outlook and application of Christian missions, and still remains the best statement of the principles of missionary policy to appear in our generation.

The book begins by a survey of the entire world-situation; then asks whither in this tempest missions are moving; defines in brief form the heart of the missionary message; sketches the great types of non-Christian religions; asks what should be the missionary's attitude toward them; describes the present condition of these faiths in this time of world-change; and finally considers the young missionary churches in their non-Christian environment.

The Christian Mission Today, edited by the Joint Section of Education and Cultivation of the Board of Missions of The Methodist Church. New York: Abingdon, 1960. \$3.95.

Written by twenty-one contemporary Protestant leaders, this study of Protestant missions seeks to examine critically the strength and weakness of the mission effort and to indicate what action must be taken in the future.

The book is divided into five parts. Part A briefly presents some of the basic theology concerning the nature of the Christian mission. Part B, dealing particularly with Methodism, gives a brief history of the development of the mission program in

this country, and Part C discusses the effectiveness of missions to China, Asia, Latin America, and Africa. Part D presents a thought-provoking analysis of current cultural trends in the world that make new demands on the mission program. Part E is an urgent plea for the minister and the people to recognize the changes that have taken place in the mission field and to plan for these new and demanding trends.

Pentecost and Missions, by Harry R. Boer. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961. \$5.00.

The writer is a theologian-missionary of the Christian Reformed Church of the United States working with the Sudan United Mission at Bukuru in Northern Nigeria. This study is a thorough-going treatise of the significance of the work of the Holy Spirit for the missionary witness of the Church. The author shows us that we have far too often tried to found our theology of missions on certain parts of the New Testament which speak explicitly about the missionary task of the Church. What we need, he argues, is a theology of mission which has its basis in the total kerygma. Only thus do we begin to see that the missionary task is not one among several aspects of the Church, but that it is rooted in the very being of the Church.

The Theology of the Christian Mission, by Gerald H. Anderson, Ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961. \$6.50.

Gerald H. Anderson, professor of church history and ecumenics at Union Theological Seminary in the Philippines, has brought together a series of articles which concern themselves with the theological foundations of the Christian mission. The work, which includes an introductory chapter by the editor, seeks to clarify the nature and meaning of the missionary enterprise in order to increase our effectiveness in presenting the gospel to the world and also to give Christians a deeper understanding of what their task is in the world.

The essays by twenty-six Christian leaders represent varied approaches to the central question. Certainly not all of them will carry the assent of any reader. However, they serve to stimulate everyone who reads them to play his own part in the task of helping the Church in our day to rediscover in the gospel the source and nature of her mission to all nations.

Missionary Methods

How Churches Grow, by Donald Anderson McGavran. New York: Friendship Press, 1959. \$3.50. (Paperback \$1.95.)

Donald McGavran was formerly a missionary to India under the Disciples of Christ, and is now serving as professor of missions and director of the graduate institute of church growth at Northwest Christian College in Eugene, Oregon. His work is an exceedingly thought-provoking presentation of a new strategy for missions in this modern day. He argues for the importance of people movements, and for a more spontaneous, mobile way of evangelism that will seek to concentrate our resources and personnel in areas of greatest response.

Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours? by Roland Allen. London: World Dominion Press. (Erdmans, reprint, 1962. \$1.65.)

This is a reprint of a "classic" on missions, originally published by the World Dominion Press, London, in 1912. Though an old book, it is still considered one of the most significant writings on missions in this century.

The late Roland Allen, former Anglican missionary to China, seeks to bring our modern missionary methods to the test of apostolic precedent. He argues that St. Paul was the greatest church-builder of Christendom; the circumstances under which he built may be in many respects different from those of the modern mission field; still we cannot but assume that his principles have a permanent value for all time, even though their method of application may vary according to circumstances.

New Buildings on Old Foundations, by J. Merle Davis. New York: International Missionary Council, 1947.

This work grew out of the findings of the International Missionary Council at Tambaram (Madras), India, in 1938, on

the subject of the economic basis of the Church. It is considered a handbook on stabilizing the younger churches in their environment.

The anthropological approach, the significance of environment for the Church, the role of missions as carriers of culture, the problem of attaining self-support, with the obstacles encountered and the resources and methods available, together with the experience of outstanding independent churches, are all reviewed. Finally, there is a characterization of the factors of the environment of the Church in the post-war age and suggestions for training the missionary and national pastor to deal with them.

The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church, by Roland Allen. New York: Friendship Press, 1961. \$3.00.

This book appeared first in 1927 as a sequel to the author's book on "missionary methods." It has undergone several editions, and along with its companion, is still considered a basic text on missions.

In this volume Roland Allen argues that from the very beginning new groups of converts must be equipped fully with all spiritual authority so that they may multiply themselves. This, he claims, would open the way to unlimited expansion of the Church by its own inherent spiritual authority, and through the irresistible attraction of the Christian gospel.