

The Princeton Theological Review

APRIL, 1916

"REDEEMER" AND "REDEMPTION"¹

There is no one of the titles of Christ which is more precious to Christian hearts than "Redeemer." There are others, it is true, which are more often on the lips of Christians. The acknowledgment of our submission to Christ as our Lord, the recognition of what we owe to Him as our Saviour,—these things, naturally, are most frequently expressed in the names we call Him by. "Redeemer," however, is a title of more intimate revelation than either "Lord" or "Saviour." It gives expression not merely to our sense that we have received salvation from Him, but also to our appreciation of what it cost Him to procure this salvation for us. It is the name specifically of the Christ of the cross. Whenever we pronounce it, the cross is placarded before our eyes and our hearts are filled with loving remembrance not only that Christ has given us salvation, but that He paid a mighty price for it.

It is a name, therefore, which is charged with deep emotion, and is to be found particularly in the language of devotion. Christian song is vocal with it. How it appears in Christian song, we may see at once from old William Dunbar's invocation, "My King, my Lord, and my Redeemer sweet." Or even from Shakespeare's description of a lost loved-one as "The precious image of our dear Redeemer." Or from Christina Rossetti's,

"Up Thy Hill of Sorrows
Thou all alone,
Jesus, man's Redeemer,
Climbing to a Throne."

¹ Opening Address, delivered in Miller Chapel, Princeton Theological Seminary, September 17, 1915. Some references and explanatory notes have been added.

indeed, quite difficult at times to know just how far the author himself approves of some of these "modern religious ideas", the rise of which he has so skillfully traced and so suggestively portrayed. Doubtless the "we" which he uses so much to designate "modern" Christians may generally, and especially if the name of Schleiermacher or Ritschl occurs in the context, fairly be taken as at least the equivalent of the editorial we. The author himself concedes that he has had to restrict himself to "a few representative topics" and that he had to present even these "in an all too fragmentary and incomplete fashion". Just how much he would make of some of the forces of conservation that conceivably may have played or still play some part, however subordinate, in the scheme of modern "reconstruction", the work before us does not disclose, though, to be sure, it leaves the rather bewildering impression that these last centuries have been inordinately fond of religious revolutions, and that little of original Protestantism is worth trying to save.

Princeton. \

FREDERICK W. LOETSCHER.

History of Christian Missions. By CHARLES HENRY ROBINSON, D.D., Hon. Canon of Ripon Cathedral and Editorial Secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1915. 8vo; pp. xii, 533.

Our first use of this *History* as a reference book was quite disappointing. By its spacious title we were beguiled into the belief that these pages would furnish, among other things, a serviceable sketch of early mediæval missions. But we could find no mention whatever of such celebrated missionaries as Columba, Augustine, Boniface, Gall, Ansgar, Cyrillus, Methodius, Otto of Bamberg. On the other hand, in glancing at the chapter on India, the eye at once fell upon the familiar words of Eusebius concerning the tradition of the Apostle Bartholomew's visit to that country, and upon other evidences of the author's intention to make at least some sections of the *History* chronologically complete. The explanation of these facts is given in the Preface, where he informs us that he had to abandon, for want of space, his original plan of including the story "of the conversion of Europe and of the methods which were adopted by its early missionaries." Meanwhile, it is to be regretted that the title of the book was not more accurately adjusted to its altered purpose.

It is, of course, a huge task that Canon Robinson has essayed to perform in this volume. Doubtless, it is still some decades too early for a thoroughly adequate and satisfactory treatment of this subject: the necessary preliminary work has yet to be done. But in an enterprise of this sort even a confessedly imperfect treatise may be exceedingly valuable; and we may add that, though our author cannot be said to have had the privilege of being a pioneer in this field, he does deserve the honor of having produced the most useful general sketch we have, in English, of modern missions.

The chief interest of the work, then, centers in the missionary efforts

made by the Church—especially the British and the Continental Churches—since the opening decades of the seventeenth century.

The main divisions of the book, naturally enough, are based upon geographical considerations. In some seventeen chapters the author surveys the major missionary operations of ecumenical Christendom. Now and then the allotment of space to some of the subdivisions seems somewhat arbitrary, but on the whole the perspective is excellent. Considerable variety is secured in the mode of treating the different countries. Sometimes, as in the case of China (chap. vii) the order of time is the governing factor; sometimes, as in the case of India (chap. IV) special attention is given to the subject of missionary methods; and in nearly every large field figures from the latest available statistics are cited to give some idea of the results of the work.

Toward the close of the volume two chapters narrate the labors of the church among Moslems and Jews—two specially difficult missionary tasks—while another chapter gives a comprehensive table of the missionary societies of to-day. The first three chapters may be regarded as introductory: the first presents missions as the distinguishing work of the church; the second gives a historical sketch of missionary methods; and the third traces the beginnings of "Modern Missions" (the views of the Reformers; Pietism; Moravianism; the formation of the first missionary societies).

The closing chapter, "The Outlook", is full of the hope that Christian faith ought to beget and that the study of missions is fitted to confirm. As the author says: "To the Christian who contemplates his obligations in the spirit of Christ's teaching, the work which is being done will appear pitifully minute, but compared with the other influences which are shaping the destinies of nations, it will be seen to be both large and intense".

As Editorial Secretary of the venerable S. P. G., Canon Robinson naturally is most familiar with Anglican missions, and we can readily forgive him for allotting a disproportionately large amount of space to this phase of the subject; the more so, because he in advance tenders his apologies to our various American societies for his imperfect presentation of their work, due to his difficulties in getting the necessary information. But we do not like the Canon's use of the word "Anglican" as a term to be coördinated with the Roman and Greek Catholic Church, on the one hand, and the Protestant churches on the other. Nor are our hopes for "Christian reunion in the mission field" as bright as those expressed by the author in an appendix on this theme, in which the "non-Episcopal" churches are invited to accept "the historic episcopate".

But we prefer to close this notice with a word of commendation. This recent issue of the International Theological Library deserves to be taken as our best English text book for the study of the history of modern Christian missions.

Princeton.

FREDERICK W. LOETSCHER.