

THE PRESBYTERIAN AND REFORMED REVIEW

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I.

PHILIP MELANCHTHON.

FEBRUARY 16, 1897, will be the four-hundredth anniversary of the birth of Philip Melancthon. The Protestant world will remember to celebrate the day as one of gracious influences. For the name of the most serene spirit among the noble group of the great reformers is one that all the churches delight to honor. Lacking the vigor and originality of his great chief, falling short of the constructive force of the resourceful Calvin, and representing in himself no national movement as did Zwingli and Knox, yet as the tried and trusted lieutenant of the mighty leader of the German Reformation, the calm and scholarly theologian, the judicious and temperate advocate, he holds a place of deserved prominence and even more deserved affection. Luther in one of his fine bursts of enthusiasm wrote of him: *Res et verba Philippus; verba sine re Erasmus; res sine verbis Lutherus; nec res nec verba Carolostadius.* Such an estimate was more than kind to Melancthon in so far at least as the comparison with Luther himself was concerned. It was to Luther in no small measure that Melancthon owed his capacity for deeds; without Luther to wield the weapons which he forged in his intellectual armory it is to be feared that the fires in the forge would often have gone out. He shares from their close comradeship a large part of Luther's fame as the herald of intellectual and religious freedom, yet, by the temperate spirit which animated his words and acts, escapes the hostility so often stirred by his rash and rough-spoken leader. If at times he yields too much in the effort to reconcile

and attractive island of Kin Shin, where the most powerful Daimio of the seventeenth century embraced Christianity; and thence to the volcano of Aso-San, with its characteristic surroundings, with which the author thinks that *Ætna* and *Vesuvius* are not to be compared. The illustrations in the book are fresh and striking and many of the scenes represented were never before presented to the public. The author shows himself a master in the natural sciences and a keen observer of the flora and fauna of the country. Nothing escapes his notice, from the roadway arched over by pink canopies of cherry blossoms to the famous cryptomerias, and the wealth of wild flowers, birds and animals, as well as plants and flowers, are noted with the sympathy and appreciation of the true nature lover. No attempt is made to deal with the political and social problems that confront the Japanese people. The author's special interest in and appreciation of the work of Christian missions appear throughout the volume. The brief sketches given of such work at various points are valuable testimony to the progress and influence of Christianity in the land.

We heartily commend this volume for its freshness, its variety and its sympathetic appreciation of a charming land and an interesting people.

Canton, China.

BENJAMIN C. HENRY.

Memoirs of the Hon. Walter Lowrie. Edited by his Son. 8vo, pp. v, 192. (New York: The Baker and Taylor Co., 1896.) Three years ago (1893) the venerable Dr. John C. Lowrie, the praise of whom is in all the churches, announced his purpose to close the extended list of his valuable services to Presbyterian missions, by issuing a comprehensive history of them—a task for the accomplishment of which his long life of labor in their behalf peculiarly prepared him. The first volume of this enterprise consisted of a new edition of Dr. Ashbel Green's *Presbyterian Missions* with annotations; which was duly noticed in this REVIEW, Vol. v, p. 560. The present volume of *Memoirs* of his honored father, the first Secretary of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church, Dr. Lowrie does not intend as the second volume of this projected work. He offers it as an independent contribution to the knowledge of what Presbyterians have done for spreading abroad the knowledge of the Gospel and how they have done it and under what leadership. The Hon. Walter Lowrie was a notable figure in both Church and State during the first two-thirds of this century, and his memory will not be permitted to die out of the heart of the Church he so efficiently served. Born, as he says in the absorbingly interesting autobiographical notes with which this volume opens, "of poor, respectable and pious parents" in Edinburgh, in 1784, he shared the hardships of pioneer life in Pennsylvania with his parents, and worked his way first to an education and then to the service of his community so rapidly that he was already at the age of twenty-seven seated in the Pennsylvania Legislature, whence he was sent in 1818 to the United States Senate. At the close of 1825 he was made Secretary of the Senate, which was practically at that time a life appointment. But he knew a higher call than even that of his country: and, after having once declined it, he was led to see his duty to resign his honorable and lucrative office to become the second Secretary of the Western Foreign Missionary Society in 1836; and when that Society was merged into the General Assembly's Board of Foreign Missions in 1837 Mr. Lowrie became the first Corresponding Secretary of that Board. This office he filled with great wisdom for the period of a generation—until May, 1868, when he offered his resignation on account of the increasing infirmities of age. He entered into rest December 14, 1868, in his eighty-fourth year, leaving his oldest son, Dr. John C. Lowrie, who had for many years been his colleague in the work of the Secre-

taryship, to continue what had been their joint labors. The present volume offers rather materials for a memoir of this devoted servant of God, than a memoir itself. It opens with a few delightful pages of autobiographical notes, written in the winter of 1824-1825 and giving an account of the struggles of Mr. Lowrie's youth up to 1807—including a valuable account of the physical effects of the revival of 1803 in which he shared. It closes with the sermon of Dr. William M. Paxton preached at his funeral, which includes a succinct account of his life and a sympathetic estimate of his character. Between these are gathered notes of the chief occurrences of his life and extracts from his writings, including specimens of his farewell addresses to departing missionaries and of his remarks on subjects of interest in his annual reports, and especially part of an extended paper on "Divine Revelation." In Walter Lowrie we may see, in a sense which will not be derogatory to others who would share the title with him, the father of American Presbyterian missions to the heathen: and we owe to him a debt of reverence, honor and gratitude which cannot easily be paid.—*The World for Christ*. By A. J. F. Behrends, D.D. A Series of Addresses on Missions, delivered at Syracuse University on the Graves Foundation, 1896. 12mo, pp. 167. (New York: Eaton & Mains; Cincinnati: Curtis & Jennings, 1896.) It would be impossible for Dr. Behrends to write otherwise than with point and brilliancy, with abundance of learning and richness of suggestion. These lectures are unmistakably his, and are full of those qualities of thought which characterize all his work. It is allowable to believe, however, that they do not quite reach the high level on which most of the products of his pen move, though the critic is disarmed by the frank account of the hurried conditions under which they were prepared that is given in the first lecture. The scheme of lectures is based on the military figure that it is a campaign of conquest to which the Church is summoned, and their keynote is sounded in the declaration that we must choose between the two alternatives of Christianity everywhere or Christianity nowhere—that, as no doctrine can survive except by dominating, so Christianity can persist only by conquering. The six lectures treat in turn the *authority* to be recognized in the great campaign, the *field* to be won, the *results* to be achieved, the *resistance* to be overcome, the *leaders* to be sent, and the *agencies* to be employed. The very enumeration of these headings exhibits the wealth of useful material which fills the lectures: and they are informed also with evangelical fervor and a clear-headed insistence on the necessity of positive conviction and teaching, based on the Biblical revelation, for success in missionary work. More than this can scarcely be said for Dr. Behrends' theological attitude. Bred among the Dutch Reformed, converted by a Methodist circuit-rider, educated for and ordained to the Baptist ministry, and serving a Congregational church, his historical development has naturally confined his convictions to the basal conceptions common to all forms of evangelical Christianity. We can only rejoice that if Augustine does not convince him, neither does Pelagius satisfy him; and that if he has "abandoned the profession of marching under the Calvinistic banner," much of the spirit which informed the divinity with which he was early inoculated has remained with him and conditioned his theological development. He may not quite know what to do with the doctrine of original sin: he may speak unadvisedly about man being "whatever he is, by voluntary agency," about "every soul being a saved soul, though it sink into perdition," and the like. But he knows how to urge as few men can urge the uniqueness and absoluteness of Christianity, the duty of preaching Christ and Him alone for salvation, the importance of a historical record of redemption, and the necessity of positive faith in the Bible Word. And in these things lies the value of his missionary addresses.—*The Duty of the*