

as to Paul's experience, the offending views are smashed with the powerful blows of the masterful contender. Radical Higher Criticism gets many a well-deserved blow.

The interpretations are, for the most part, correct, always clear, and are so given as to help the teacher or preacher directly and extensively. It ought, perhaps, to be said that these commentaries are all prepared with the preacher and his use of them distinctly in mind. But this fact must not be taken to suggest that the lay reader will not find them highly profitable. They will always be within his comprehension and will stimulate and embolden his faith.

The different parts of the Acts are not expounded with corresponding completeness and at many points one longs for more.

Dr. Carroll caught with clear insight Luke's idea and plan in writing Acts and so he expounds him with sympathy.

One cannot at all points accept the commentator's positions. For example, in the fine interpretation of Pentecost it is unfortunate that no direct answer is found to Dr. Carroll's own question as to just what the "gift of the Holy Spirit" consists in and what was its purpose. The phrase "even to as many as the Lord our God shall call unto Him," (2:39), is taken by Dr. Carroll as limiting the promise among believers to selected ones, presumably few. This seems to be in direct conflict with Peter's idea. It is curious to find Dr. Carroll concluding that the one serious defect with the immersion of the twelve in Acts 19 was an improper administrator. An improper administrator they seem sure enough to have had, but that does not at all appear to be the point of Paul's objection. Here, as at some other places, the passages to be interpreted and the interpretations given are too much under the influence of local and temporary controversies. But when it comes to great general ideas of the Kingdom and of the Gospel the comments reflect true insight and mighty grip on the great things of God and of Christ Jesus.

W. O. CARVER.

**The Acts of the Apostles.** By William Owen Carver, Th.D., LL.D., Associate Professor of Interpretation of the New Testament and Pro-

fessor of Comparative Religion and Missions in the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Nashville, Tenn., 1916, Sunday School Board Southern Baptist Convention. Volume in "The Convention Series." I. J. Van Ness, D.D., General Editor. 270 pp. 75 cents, postpaid.

Our Sunday School Board at Nashville is rendering many valuable services to the denomination in the South and throughout the world. Not the least of these services is the series of handy commentaries on the different books of the Bible that it is sending out. The latest one of these commentaries is the volume on the book of Acts. Dr. Carver is thoroughly at home in the broad field of religious literature and of course is at home in any part of the Bible. But if any book in the Bible appeals to him more than another one would think that this book would naturally be the book of Acts. On reading this last volume from his pen this general surmise is thoroughly sustained.

The general point of view from which this commentary is written may be gathered from a sentence or two from the author's introduction. He says, "It was not to tell the story of men, not even of apostles, that Luke wrote, not even of Peter, the great leader, nor of Paul, the mighty herald and teacher. He would rather show how the Holy Spirit carried forward the work Jesus began. In this work men are agents, but the Spirit is the Power and the Mind. Luke selects for record those 'acts' which reveal and illustrate the plan and method of the Holy Spirit." This point of view is maintained throughout the volume, and when one comes to the last page and reads Dr. Carver's "Resume of the Gospel of the Holy Spirit," he is made to hope that this gifted and devout student of the word and work of God may see his way one of these days to give to the world a fuller unfolding of the points named in this one page of outline resume.

The general analysis of the book of Acts followed in this commentary is the most simple and natural possible. It is simply that laid down by Luke himself in 1:8. "In the commission at the ascension, which is recorded only in Acts (1:6-8)," a geographical plan is given and this the key to the logical analysis

of the book. The missionaries were to witness (1) "in Jerusalem"; (2) "in all Judea and Samaria"; (3) "into the uttermost part of the earth."

The remaining pages of the book are taken up with a faithful unfolding of these three lines of progress as the Holy Spirit carries them on through the men and women who have become "mete for the Master's use."

The book is arranged in convenient form, the text being at the top of the page and the comment and exposition on the lower part of the page. In this way it is easy to keep the eye in close touch with both the text and the comment. This is not a commentary that one will wish to put on the shelf to refer to for light on a specific verse on special occasions—though it will yield help for this kind of use. It is rather a book that one will wish to read right through that he may get a vivid and comprehensive view of the Spirit's work in the early days of the Church. Besides this, there are many gems of suggestion which ought to form life concepts for the Christian student and worker. For example, on the first page of the comments I find the following: "In his flesh and in the Holy Spirit the work of Jesus includes *doing* and *teaching*. The doing is first and is interpreted by the teaching which in turn puts others to doing. When true, Christianity always has these two elements, deed and creed, active energy and propagating faith." A most interesting and instructive comparison is made on p. 23f between the advent of Jesus into the world and the advent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. One would love to copy two pages here, but a sentence or two will have to suffice: "As we linger with reverent love about the manger in Bethlehem, so we should draw near to Pentecost and learn its meaning. God and man became perfectly united in Jesus of Nazareth that God and man might become organically united in the church, which is Christ's mystical and historical body, the institution and organism in which by the Holy Spirit God lives in the social life of the world."

It hardly need be said that the point of view of this book is that of the Baptists, though it is in no sense a sectarian book. Dr. Carver has followed closely the best Greek text and often ren-

ders a passage with an abruptness that might not please some people. His purpose evidently is to arrest attention and try to bring people as nearly as possible to hear the voice of the Spirit of God.

The price of the book is very low. It has come from the press at a very opportune time when we are studying the book of Acts in the International Sunday School lessons. Those who are wise will take the hint; those who are otherwise will miss a treasure that is worth while.

What an inspiration it is to read such a book as this and then to reflect that every true believer and humble worker for the Lord is in the best sense in direct line of apostolic succession.

The last sentence of comment is this: "This 'Gospel of the Holy Spirit' came to its end here, but went forth as a gospel from then till the end of time, from there to the ends of the earth." Who is not grateful that he can still have a part in carrying on to completion what God has so well begun in Jesus, in the Holy Spirit, and in those who have labored in the Lord through the centuries? "Other men have labored and ye are entered into their labors."

Wake Forest, N. C.

W. R. CULLOM.

## II. CHURCH HISTORY.

**The Works of John Smyth, Fellow of Christ's College, 1594-8.** Tercentenary Edition for the Baptist Historical Society, with notes and Biography by W. T. Whitley, M.A., LL.D., F. R. Hist. S., Sometime Exhibitioner of King's College. Cambridge University Press, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1915. Two vols. \$10.00.

More and more we are learning that John Smyth, the "Se-Baptist" as Dexter called him, was one of the ablest and most important characters in the history of early English non-conformity. Dexter was the first to give us any very clear and definite view of the man; his presentation was being filled out and made clearer by Shakespeare, Burgess and Burrage. Dr. Whitley has now put the capstone on recent investigation by giving this edition of his works. It is the most important con-