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A. T. ROBERTSON.

The Gospel and the Epistles of St. John. By James Alex. Robertson, M. A. T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1920. 129 pp. In paper covers, 11d.

This is an astonishing series of Bible Class Primers to which the present little book belongs. The author of this primer is a brilliant young scholar already well known by his "Spiritual Pilgrimage of Jesus." He has scholarship, insight, style and religious flavor. There is a quality that wins the reader to fresh interest and whets the appetite for more. Happy are the pupils who use the primer.

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A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians. By Ernest De Witt Burton, Professor of New Testament Interpretation in the University of Chicago. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1920. LXXXIX, 541 pp. \$4.50 net.

That one of the ripest and most painstaking of New Testament scholars has for nearly a quarter of a century placed the making of this Commentary in the forefront of his labors at once assures us that it must be one of the very best of the International Critical series. Nor does one have to read far before finding the ripe fruit of these long years of growing investigation, reflection and thought. So much effort and such results of the effort justify the giving of more space to this commentary on so brief an epistle than has been allotted to some that are much longer.

Beginning in 1896 the preparation of the work, as he tells us in the Preface, Dr. Burton defined for himself the points of

emphasis which should characterize the commentary. Others were considered later, especially that of the relation of Christianity to the religions of the Roman Empire, which was wisely rejected, for surely this could play no important part in the interpretation of this epistle. Three items were selected as those to guide in the "lines of study" to which he would confine himself. "I decided," he says, "not to attempt an exhaustive study of the history of the interpretation of the epistle, or of the rabbinic writings and method of exegesis. Convinced that, despite all that had been done in study of the vocabulary of the New Testament, much remained still to be done, and strongly inclined to expect that such study would add materially in the recovery of the primary elements of the thought of the Apostle Paul, persuaded also that such lexicographical work would prepare the way for a clearer perception of the course of thought of the epistle, I determined, while not neglecting the other lines of study, to give my chief attention first to a fresh historical study of the vocabulary of the letter and then to endeavor to trace its course of thought with exactness and to state it with clearness." To these two ideals was added the third, "the relation of the problems discussed by the apostle to those of our own day." In pursuance of these lines there were inevitable by-products of great value. Such of these as are relevant for this Commentary are included in the 160 pages Appendix of "Detached Notes on Important Terms of Paul's Vocabulary." It is obviously not possible to give any adequate review of such a commentary within the legitimate scope of this notice. Every page bears the marks of the faithful use of the mature scholarship of the author. I do not find myself able to accept the author's views at some points. It may be that when I have studied the epistle half as much as he has I shall agree. Yet one objection that some will find with the author is that in so many cases he does not give one the benefit of his own conclusion, but leaves the matter in suspense, after a full statement of differing views and the reasons for them.

In the main the conclusions of Dr. Burton on questions of external criticism, date, composition, purpose and the like are in harmony with the conservative scholarship. He inclines,

hesitantly, to Ephesus on the third missionary tour as the time of writing, which is, all in all, the most probable location. An error (p. LXI) speaks of "Antioch between his first and second journeys." Other incidental errors can be corrected in later editions. E. g., *Hastings Encyc. Rel. and Eth.* is called *Dict.* (p. XVIII).

Paul's conversion is placed in 31, which is quite extreme, and yet it must be true that the chronologists have been giving too much time for the Jerusalem period before the great persecution.

In the matter of vocabulary, to which the author has given major attention, the students of the New Testament will acknowledge a great debt of gratitude to Dr. Burton for his tireless labors and none the less so when his carefully collected examples and comments do not command a full assent to his own conclusions or to use. His dealing with the term *ἐκκλησία* is a splendid example of diligence and pains, but even then it seems to this reviewer that, while his main conclusions are eminently correct, there is a lack of discernment in affirming that in certain passages the word "cannot" refer to any local church or organized church at all, e. g., Gal. 1:13, 1 Cor. 10:32, 15:9, Phil. 3:6.

Concerning *ἕτερος* and *ἄλλος* I am an extremist, it may well be. Practically all the scholars are now against me. But I have yet to see an example in which the two words are used synonymously. It seems to me that the scholars miss the point of the writer when they identify them and take them as meaning the same thing. Burton refutes well the opposite extreme of Ramsay (curious turn, to be sure), that the terms in earlier Greek mean just the reverse of that commonly recognized. But Burton has placed ample material before any interested students for examining the facts.

All through the body of the exposition we have the benefit of these word studies, to the enrichment of the exegesis. As for the "course of the thought" each expositor will have his own logical forms for disposing of the material, but one will be ready at all times to see that the analysis here has been faithful to the essential plan and purpose of the apostle.

The practical application to present day situations is made rather incidentally than as a distinct element in the form of the presentation. The work is especially needed at this time. Nor, in truth, has there been any age when this insistent claim for the gospel of salvation by faith apart from works of law, has not needed emphasis. Legal justification is such an insistent tendency of the human mind and heart that even when one has become vigorously insistent on the Pauline principle there lurks still the subtle danger that faith shall itself become for many a legalistic tie and that the heart of the gospel will really be lost.

When Dr. Burton drops the reference distinctly to Jews in the first verses of Chapter IV and makes Paul refer to Christians without distinction of religious and race relations in their pre-Christian state, I am bound still to think that he is mistaken and has so far failed to grasp the apostle's argument; but the criticism is made with the utmost deference and with appreciation of the considerations that influenced the commentator. The handling of the difficult arguments of Chapter III deserves great praise for its faithfulness at once to the facts of the case and to the spirit of Paul. At this particular point more could have been said, but hardly more truly and acceptably.

His interpretation of 3:20, "a mediator is not of one, but God is one," is clear and concise and must be accepted as correct. There is, however, a point in theology raised that one cannot but wish the commentator had dealt with. Paul faced the same problem here that is before the "new theologian" of our time. How can such a God as we know in Jesus Christ either demand or even permit mediation? It would have been a fine service to show how differently from the "new" theology Paul solves this problem. It may well be that this was no part of Paul's immediate argument, but the principle of showing "the application to problems of our own time" would more than have justified the introduction of the discussion.

One must crave the indulgence of reader and author alike for so scrappy and inadequate a discussion of one of the truly great volumes of the *International Critical Commentary*.

W. O. CARVER.