

## BOOK NOTES

Baker Book House continues to perform a major service for libraries and students of theology by reprinting a host of valuable but older works. *The Writings of James [Jacob] Arminius* (3 vols.: 669 pp., 538 pp., 569 pp., \$24.95 paper), edited by James Nichols and W. R. Bagnall, allows students of all theological persuasions to read this much-maligned theologian for themselves. Coming down to a much later generation of theological debate in the Netherlands we are offered a reprint of the survey of Christian doctrine by Herman Bavinck entitled *Our Reasonable Faith* (trans. H. Zylstra, 568 pp., \$6.95 paper). Bavinck is important not only for the influence he has had in the Dutch Reformed school of Abraham Kuyper but also because he has been hailed in recent days as offering an alternative to B. B. Warfield in the debate concerning the relationship between Scripture and criticism. Again, the student has the opportunity of reading Bavinck for himself and thus judging the issue. *Reformed Dogmatics*, edited and translated by John W. Beardslee III, is a reprint edition of an important collection of theological material reflecting seventeenth-century Calvinistic theology (471 pp., \$6.95 paper). Theologians included are Johannes Wollebius (1586-1629), Gisbertus Voetius (1589-1676), and Francis Turretin (1623-1687). The last of these writers has been said to have been a major influence on Warfield, who in turn was the major influence in the development of what we today recognize in North America as the evangelical view of Scripture.

W. W. G.

*The Creeds of Christendom*. By Philip Schaff. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977 [1931], 3 vols.: 965 pp., 641 pp., 973 pp., \$34.95 paper.

Philip Schaff's *The Creeds of Christendom* has been a standard reference work since its first edition more than a century ago. A new generation of students and scholars will be delighted to have it in this inexpensive paperback reprint edition. Volume one contains a history of Christian doctrine from the first century through the middle of the nineteenth. This is the volume that is probably most in need of revision, since such a large quantity of research has been produced since 1876. Still, reading Schaff's overview provides one with a superb if somewhat dated introduction to the history of Christian thought.

The second volume begins with the confessional statements in Scripture and continues through the ante-Nicene canons, the early ecumenical creeds, the doctrinal confessions of Eastern Orthodoxy, and the major creedal proclamations of the Roman Catholic Church. Volume three contains the Lutheran, Anglican, Reformed and later Protestant confessions. Here there is the need for much supplementary material, which would deal with many of the minor Protestant groups that have been omitted and the confessional statements that have been produced since the work of Philip Schaff and his son, David (who added supplementary material as late as 1931). Perhaps some day someone will gather together material for a fourth volume to be attached as a supplement to Schaff's collection of creeds.

W. W. G.

*Light From the Ancient East*. By Adolf Deissmann. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1978, xxxii + 535 pp., \$8.95 paper. *The Acts of the Apostles*. By Richard B. Rackham. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1978, cxvi + 524 pp., \$8.95 paper.

Both of these volumes are Baker reprints and part of their Twinbrook series. Rackham's commentary was first published in 1901 and served as one of the basic references in that

area for many years. Students of the Acts will appreciate the good exposition of the text and helpful insights into early Christianity.

*Light From the Ancient East* is still a valuable addition to any library. By using papyrus discoveries Deissmann demonstrated that the Greek of the NT was a common language of the day and not a special "holy" language. Both the text and illustrations make it an exciting and readable book. This reprint is from the "fourth, completely revised" and enlarged edition of 1923 as translated by Lionel R. M. Strachan.

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*The Holy Land.* By G. Frederick Owen. Baker, 1977, 327 pp., \$9.95.

After a foreword by James Irwin, Owen presents a panoramic overview of the "Holy Land." Starting with the older Canaanite towns in Lebanon he divides the country into four geographical areas: the coastal plain, the central mountains, the Jordan rift and the eastern tableland. He then proceeds, going from north to south, to describe what would be found by a contemporary traveler in these areas of Lebanon, Israel, Syria and Jordan. Not only does he present the "holy"—i.e., Biblical—aspects but also those that are a bit less so—e.g., the artillery batteries of Napoleon outside Acre.

This popular presentation, with accompanying photographs (but an unfortunate lack of maps), provides the prospective visitor with an introduction to the area. For those on more than a lightning tour he provides a short bibliography, which could well have included, for those interested in the Biblical period, Y. Aharoni's *Land of the Bible* (Philadelphia and London, 1967) and the *Macmillan Bible Atlas* (ed. Y. Aharoni and M. Avi-Yonah (New York and London, 1968).

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