

Reviews



David Fergusson and Mark W. Elliott, eds., *The History of Scottish Theology, Volume 3: The Long Twentieth Century* (Oxford: OUP, 2019), pp. xii+373, ISBN 978-0198759355. £95.00

The OUP *History of Scottish Theology* is a three-volume set tracking Scottish theology from Celtic origins right through to around 2000. The third volume picks up where the second left off with articles covering the history of Scottish theology leading into and out of the twentieth century. Unlike the first volume, the third lacks a section describing the scope of the series. However, from that first volume we know that the set seeks to present the mosaic of Scottish historical theology, not seeking to tell a specific story, but to illuminate the various contexts, themes, and texts. The set fills a significant gap, providing a reference work in the history of Scottish theology. As with the previous two volumes, this is an excellent work, deserving a prominent place on the shelves of theological libraries in Scotland and beyond.

The volume is divided into 25 chapters, each presenting a different portion of the patchwork of different theologians, themes, and denominational streams which together make up the history of Scottish theology. The selection of a broad array of topics is in line with the purpose of the three-volume set, demonstrating the variety of Scottish theology. Different chapters will appeal to different readers, and the bibliographies at the ends of each chapter will help those who wish to delve deeper into particular topics. There are chapters focusing on particular streams of theology, such as Bruce L. McCormack's chapter on "Scottish Kenotic Theology" (Chapter 2), chapters relating to particular events and their effects, such as Marlene Finlayson's "Theology and Ecumenism after Edinburgh 1910" (Chapter 5), chapters focusing on particular theologians, such as Paul D. Molnar's "Thomas F. Torrance" (Chapter 17), chapters focusing on particular denominations, such as William McFadden's "Catholic Theology since Vatican II" (Chapter 22). What follows is a brief discussion of selected chapters.

The first chapter, by Domhnall Stübhart, is a fascinating discussion of "The Theology of *Carmina Gadelica*". First published in 1900, and



compiled by Alexander Carmichael, *Carmina Gadelica* was a compendium of literary traditions thought to contain many ancient verses which reached back even before Christian times, with the blending of pagan and Christian religions. Through the chapter, Stiùbhart outlines for the reader the controversial nature of the book. In examining the gestation of the work, we come to see that it does not simply represent the poetry and spirituality of the past, but was '[a]ffected by the spiritual concerns and artistic aspirations of the Celtic Renaissance, the fervent religious debates then racking the Free Church, and the viewpoints of well-wishers and disciples in the urban middle-class Gaelic diaspora'. Thus '*Carmina Gadelica*, and the authorial persona of Alexander Carmichael himself, were reworked, aestheticized, spiritualized, and abstracted' (p. 15).

The Gifford Lectures have been an important part of Scottish theology for over a century. In Chapter 7, Gordon Graham attempts to outline the impact of these internationally recognised lectures, asking how well they have influenced disciplines and how well they realised the intention Lord Gifford had for them. Graham finds that the lectures had a varied impact, with some lectures inspiring large audiences, some leading to significant publications exerting influence in their disciplines and others achieving neither. The desire of Lord Gifford that the lectures be public and popular means that those inspiring larger audiences may perhaps be said to be more in line with Lord Gifford's Will. However, Graham shows that '[s]uccess on either score means that Lord Gifford's bequest left the world a richer place and played a notable part in enhancing the work of the Scottish universities' (p. 103).

A number of chapters deal with specific theologians. One theologian which could not go without mention is Thomas F. Torrance. Paul D. Molnar discusses Torrance and his theology in Chapter 17. After giving a brief biography, Molnar outlines aspects of his theology. He approaches this discussion first from a dogmatics angle then from an ecumenical angle. After this he overviews Torrance's relationship with Barth and then with science. This leads into a discussion of how we think about God and his views on justification. Molnar ends the chapter by discussing some critical issues surrounding Torrance's theology. This section includes critiques of Torrance, some of which Molnar argues to be unjustified.

While Torrance was such an important Scottish theologian, in Scottish Reformed theology he appears much less central. Gary D. Badcock examines "Reformed Theology in the Later Twentieth Century" (Chapter

25) and shows that Torrance was admired more from afar than at home in Scotland. From within, Badcock sees the theology as ‘a story of conflicted relationships and loyalties’ (p. 349). Following an examination of the two main streams of theology identified in Edinburgh and Glasgow, Badcock comments that ‘we may have cause to wonder whether there ever was such a great gulf fixed between the theologies of Glasgow and Edinburgh [...]’. For the leading representatives of both schools shared not only much the same education and experience, and assumed terms of debate provided by relatively limited theological movements of the twentieth century, but the two sides shared many of the same objectives’ (p. 353). However, Badcock does identify one dissident voice: John McIntyre. From McIntyre he draws the point that much theology in McIntyre’s lifetime was preoccupied with a set of questions already proven to be dead ends. Badcock ends suggesting the need to ponder McIntyre’s ‘diagnosis of the theological situation’ and ask whether it could ‘be in great measure the fault of the dominant theology of the later twentieth century that the Church has proven so ineffectual in proclaiming the Gospel in recent decades’ (p. 357).

There are many excellent chapters contained within this volume and choosing which to focus on was a difficult task. The work deserves closer attention and study from all who are interested in the history of Scottish theology. I expect that this three-volume work will become a standard reference for many years to come, and inspire students with the breadth of issues they can pursue within the history of Scottish theology. I happily commend this work.

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Donald Fairbairn and Ryan M. Reeves, *The Story of Creeds and Confessions: Tracing the Development of the Christian Faith* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2019), pp. xi + 396, ISBN 978-0801098161. £22.99

This well-researched introduction to the history of the Christian faith takes a novel approach. Rather than simply providing the reader with a

