

In Memoriam:

Kenneth Scott Latourette, 1884-1968

Professor Latourette was one of the distinguished historians of our time. He gave to Church History a dimension never before attained. Previous historians forgot, said he, that the earth is round. His *Expansion of Christianity* in seven volumes dealt not merely with the geographical expansion of the Christian faith, whether by conversion or migration, but also with the interplay of Christianity with successive cultures. He proclaimed the nineteenth as the greatest Christian century, not merely because of the enormous missionary outreach but because he believed that in this century Christianity had a greater impact on world culture than ever previously. The work improved as it advanced. The earlier volumes were well organized expositions of received knowledge. As he came down to the modern period he amassed, organized and presented vast bodies of material hitherto inaccessible. His thesis was challenged by some who, while admitting the geographical expansion, yet pointed to the appalling recessions in some lands where Christianity had once been dominant, notably Russia and Germany. I suspect, though his autobiography does not distinctly say so, that his next five volumes on *Christianity in a Revolutionary Age* consisted of his own wrestling with the problem of recession. His basic optimism remained unshaken, for he continued to believe that after recession would come resurgence. His one volume history of Christianity was not just an epitome of earlier studies but involved independent investigation. It was designed to give the modern period its due in the total picture.

In the field of Asian studies he has been a pioneer in the West and has done much to introduce them into the curricula of American colleges. On China he has written: *The History of Christian Missions in China, The Development of China, The Chinese, Their History and Culture* and on Japan *The Development of Japan*.

For all of these significant contributions he was honored with the presidency of the American Historical Association.

He has been an active churchman, associate pastor at Calvary Baptist Church where he has regularly taught a class, and president of the Northern Baptist Convention. At Yale he has been active in Dwight Hall, the Yale Hope Mission and Yale in China.

ROLAND H. BAINTON