BOOKS I HAVE READ: NOVEMBER 2018

Posted on December 3, 2018 by Eddie

Some murders, some missiology, some history and a few walks in the hills: my reading for November.
Category: Observations

This month, I've managed to do some reading across a variety of genres. There is less detective fiction than usual and a couple of books about hill walking.

Detective Fiction

I found The Common EnemyÂ to be a fairly interesting story, but it is was rather spoiled by rather one-dimensional characters and a lot of simple generalisations. However, the underlying theme of the murder of a far-right activist had enough going for it that it kept me reading.Â The Owl Always Hunts at NightÂ by Samuel Bjork is a Scandi-trÃ©s-noir mystery. It's part of a series featuring the same detectives and if you like your mysteries very dark, you will enjoy them. While on the noir theme,Â The Restless DeadÂ has enough details about forensic investigations to leave keep most people happy. If you enjoy the Kay Scarpetta novels or Silent Witness, you will probably enjoy this - though the setting in rural Essex is not as exciting as Patricia Cornwall's oeuvre. Â Murder at Maypole Manor: A Posie Parker MysteryÂ was free on Kindle for a short time; I'm not sure that it was worth even that much.

Other Fiction

Talon (Lt. Peter Harding Book 3), I thoroughly enjoyed the first two books in this series, not so much the third. It's about life in the submarine service during the second world war and may interest some.

Non-Fiction

There is something rather odd about the title of Father, Son and the Pennine Way: 5 days, 90 miles - what could possibly go wrong?Â (clue, the Pennine Way is over 200 miles long). The book is ok, it's not as laugh out loud funny as the Amazon reviews say, but it is mildly diverting. By contrast,Â The Last Hillwalker: A sideways look at forty years in Britain's MountainsÂ is not particularly funny at all (though it does have it's moments). However, for anyone who loves the hills, this is a must-read. I've never climbed to the same level as John Burns, but I recognise theÂ love for the mountains, bordering on obsession, that he writes about. In another life, this could have been me. I loved it.

The thing about reading on a Kindle is that you don't always appreciate how long a book is when you first start reading it.Â One Hundred Days: Napoleon's Road to WaterlooÂ is a big book. The chapters are long and there are a lot of them. As someone who has read a good deal about aspects of the Napoleonic wars, I found this book absolutely fascinating. The title describes the subject matter perfectly and you should be able to measure whether it is something that is likely to interest you.Â Bomber War: Arthur Harris and the Allied Bomber Offensive 1939-1945Â is another (long) book where the title tells you more or less all you need to know. The bit that sets this book out from some of the others on the subject is the background information on the politicking that went on between the British and Americans during the early 1940s.

Celtic Christianity and the First Christian Kings in Britain: From Saint Patrick and St. Columba, to King Ethelbert and King AlfredÂ really isn't a good book. Anything which quotes TV documentaries as

authentic historical sources is on shaky ground! The author seeks to present Celtic Christianity as a version of modern charismatic evangelicalism, which is a historical travesty. If we are to learn anything from the past, we have to understand it on its own terms, rather than forcing it to fit ours. The book also ignores most of the first Christian Kings in Britain, which rather defeats the object.

For a short time, Amazon was selling The J. H. Bavinck ReaderÂ at a very reduced price. It is a book that should be of interest to anyone with an academic interest in mission. However, at the normal price of around Â£30, it really isn't worth buying. Find a copy in your library! I boughtÂ The Gospel Among the Nations: A Documentary History of InculturationÂ a while ago, for reasons that I don't quite remember. I have used it as a reference text (which is its purpose) but only sat down to read it right through in the last couple of weeks. The opening chapters are a broad overview of mission history and then the rest of the book consists of historical documents about mission and apologetics from across history and across the breadth of church tradition.