

MORGAN, HERBERT (1875 - 1946), minister (B), university lecturer, and director of extra-mural studies

Name: Herbert Morgan
Date of birth: 1875
Date of death: 1946
Spouse: Mrs Morgan
Gender: Male
Occupation: minister (B), university lecturer, and director of extra-mural studies
Area of activity: Education; Religion
Author: Griffith Milwyn Griffiths

Born at Onllwyn in the Neath valley, 15 September 1875, but at an early age moved with his parents to Porth in the Rhondda. He was educated at Porth, but owing to the family's straitened circumstances he was not able to continue his education. Instead he became a clerk with the Pontypridd Water Board, but his remarkable gifts could not be hidden, and, with the support of his neighbours and others, he was able to embark upon a successful academic career at the Pontypridd Academy, the Baptist College and the University College at Cardiff. He graduated with honours in philosophy and Greek, and in 1902 proceeded to Mansfield College, Oxford, where he took a degree in theology and won a scholarship which took him to the university of Marburg in Germany for further study. He accepted a call to the pastorate of the Welsh (B) church in Castle Street, London, in 1906, and in 1912 he left to undertake the pastorate of Tyndale church in Bristol. In the 1918 parliamentary election he contested the Neath constituency for Labour, but his pacifist views were unacceptable in the climate of that election, and Welsh Labour representation lost a figure of outstanding calibre. In 1920, however, he secured a post for which he was eminently fitted, that of Director of extra-mural studies newly established at Aberystwyth. He retired in 1940, having set the department on secure foundations.

He was in great demand as a preacher in Welsh and English, though not of the style regarded as 'popular', and as a lecturer. In 1945, the Welsh Baptist Union honoured him as their president. Though not himself a strict Baptist, during the year of his presidency he was loyal to the convictions of his denomination. He was keenly interested in the development of social services and his publications reveal this interest, e.g. *The Church and the social problem*, 1911, *Housing and public welfare*, 1912, *The Social task in Wales*, 1919, and *Christ and Caesar*, 1921, a joint study, with Nathaniel Micklem, of social responsibilities. His last work, *Reason and religion*, 1946, is a liberal theologian's reaction to the teaching of Karl Barth, which was gaining ground in some circles in Wales. He was a biblical scholar but this aspect of his learning is represented only by a Welsh commentary, with **John Gwili Jenkins** on portions of the Book of Isaiah, 1908, and articles in *Y Geiriadur Beiblaidd* (1926). He married Mrs. James, a widow, who was a member of Tyndale church. He died at Aberystwyth, 22 September 1946, aged 72.

Author

Griffith Milwyn Griffiths

Sources

Efrydiau Athronyddol, x, 1947

Seren Gomer, xxxvii, no.1

Walter P. John and Gwilym T. Hughes, *Hanes Castle Street a'r Bedyddwyr Cymraeg yn Llundain* (Llandysul 1959)

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