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George Müller 1805-1898: Delighted in God

Roger Steer

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George Müller's arithmetic is staggering: £1.5 million raised for the support of thousands of orphans (the equivalent of £100 million today); seventy-seven day schools supported, representing some 5,900 pupils in England and Wales and a further 1,800 abroad (and for good measure another 3,200 in Sunday schools); £10,000 sent abroad to Christian workers annually by the 1870s; forty-two countries visited and some 200,000 miles travelled during his world preaching tours begun in 1875 when he should have been retiring; and living until he was 92 with a wealth at death of £223 19s. 4d.

In 1878 one American newspaper described him: 'He is about six feet high, quite erect, his locks are silvered with age; his face bears the distinctive outlines of the refined German, while his *personel* [*sic*], at once classic and military, impresses rather by the expression of joy and holy confidence that play upon his countenance'. Yet he was not without his faults. It was his stiff Prussian spirit that F.F. Bruce blamed for his lack of reconciliation with J.N. Darby in their meeting of 1849. But primarily his life is a testament to the triangle of faith, prayer and God.

Christian Focus is to be congratulated in this reissue of Roger Steer's biography of Müller (first published in 1975) in their attractively designed HistoryMakers series—its cool, classic black covers from designer Alister MacInnes clearly a tribute to Germano Facetti's designs for Penguin. There is an added foreword from the author on Müller's relevance to constant prayer, and a final chapter by Julian Marsh updating the contemporary story of the George Müller Foundation. The biography is accessible and written in an easy style. It is a useful book of first resort to those wanting to learn about Müller or wanting to be again challenged by Müller's faith. However, generally Steer accepts Müller's own assessment of himself as

presented in his *Autobiography*. We still await a biography which is also a work of critical historiography.

Neil Dickson