

Book Reviews

Revision or New Translation?, by Oswald T. Allis. Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1948. xi plus 164 pages. \$2.00.

Revision or New Translation? professes to look at the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament from the point of view of evangelical theology. It may be proper, therefore, to see whether it expresses the consensus of those who hold this theological position.

Dr. Allis apparently has two fixed points from which to examine any English New Testament—viz., the best Greek text, and the King James Version. With the first of these this reviewer is in full agreement. It seems, therefore, that the RSV may justifiably be criticized for taking such liberties as breaking up long sentences in the text, sometimes using prosaic English paraphrases to render Greek literary figures and graphic constructions, and a frequent failure to indicate alternative readings or translations for debatable passages. We disagree, however, with the degree to which Allis makes the Authorized Version his second standard by which to judge the RSV. It may be doubted that the translators of the earliest English Bibles, or the revisers—which they certainly were—who produced the King James version, were attempting to render the Scriptures into an English idiom which was anything more or less than the language of their day. Nor will this conception be invalidated if one assumes, with Allis, that the forms of “thou” were becoming archaic in 1611 and were retained to distinguish between the singular and plural of the second person (pp. 54-6). The crux of the matter seems to be that Allis believes that the Scriptures in English should purposely be retained in an archaic “Biblical” English; but it is at

least equally in accord with sound theology to ask that the most important literature ever written be deliberately presented in the clearest possible form of the language for each age.

Allis is himself perhaps not entirely free from the inconsistency with which he charges the RSV. He is justified for criticizing its tendency to paraphrase and interpret needlessly at times (pp. 16 ff.). Yet Allis objects because RSV *fails* to add an interpretation in Matt. 1:6. Here the Greek states that Solomon was born ἐκ τῆς τοῦ Οὐρίας, of which the nearest English is something like “from the woman of Uriah”, and of which the meaning, “from the wife of Uriah”, would normally be accepted without question. Here the RSV rendering, “the wife of Uriah”, certainly more accurately represents the Greek than “her *that had been the wife* of Urias” of the AV, the italics indicating the interpolation. Here Allis finds fault with RSV because it does *not* add a note which is not to be found in the Greek text.

Some will feel that Allis did not intend to deal objectively with the Revised Standard Version. One will search in vain for any but the most reluctant commendation of the version, although no fair-minded person can be blind to its excellence in many respects. Moreover, Allis seems sometimes to prove too much. To suggest, for instance, that to translate a Greek word into modern rather than archaic English is comparable to altering the English words which open Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address (p. 130) is fallacious reasoning entirely unworthy of a scholar like Dr. Allis. In Acts 3:22, the RSV rendering is both more accurate and more “orthodox” than that of the AV. The RSV reading correctly reflects the Greek ὥς ἐμέ, which implies that

the parallelism between Moses and "the prophet (Jesus)" will be that God will raise up the prophet as he raised up Moses; whereas the AV can easily be misunderstood as stating that Jesus will be merely a prophet "similar to (like)" Moses. Yet Allis chooses to prefer the AV here, simply on the grounds that it is "a perfectly permissible rendering" (p. 121).

Neither does it seem proper to confuse the issue by pointing out weaknesses of other modern English versions which are not found in the RSV. Under the section, *The Quest for Novelty* (pp. 5-6), Allis quotes Luke 2:41 from AV, RSV, and five other versions. Here RSV differs from AV only in capitalizing "Passover" and is more like AV even than is the Revised Version. Yet Allis gives no word of commendation to RSV for so nearly approaching his standard of excellence, but instead calls attention to the variety of renderings in the five other versions. In this connection it is interesting to note that whenever the readings of the seven versions are compared, AV and RSV are placed at opposite ends of the list.

Another apparent lack of objectivity is seen in the author's references to the personnel of the committee which produced the RSV. He refers to Dr. A. R. Wentz as "the one conservative" on the committee (p. 161), and never once states that Dr. A. T. Robertson, whose theology was undoubtedly "conservative", was a member of the committee until his death. It may be admitted that any man's theology will tend to influence his translation of the New Testament, and Allis implies that an affirmative answer is required to the title of his ninth chapter, "Is the Revised Standard Version a 'Liberal' Version?" (p. 143). Yet he hardly demonstrates this fact in this chapter, for the sole New Testament reference which he gives is a part of Heb. 1:8 in which RSV and AV are exactly alike in a reading which he himself calls "the only natural one" (p. 152)!

We do not unconditionally recommend the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament. Some of Allis' criticisms are

pertinent, and his book is of value in calling attention to some of the failings of the version. On the other hand, the completely satisfactory English version will probably never be made; and it is hardly out of place to expect that a comparison of versions, such as Allis has ostensibly given, should point out both excellences and weaknesses of both versions.

J. HAROLD GREENLEE

The Authority of the Biblical Revelation,
by Cunliffe-Jones, Hubert. Boston:
The Pilgrim Press, 1948. 153 pages.
7/6; \$2.50.

Here is a book well worth the reading. Professor Cunliffe-Jones has been sickened by the repudiation of theology by the many in our generation. This lack of a proper theological doctrine of the Bible is due to the kind of historical study of the Bible which rejected fundamentalism and substituted nothing in its place. The thesis of the book is plainly stated in the Preface. Cunliffe-Jones claims to accept the findings of historical criticism. Says he: "In their controversy with fundamentalism the historical critics were entirely, and in my judgment finally, successful." However, liberal critics of the Bible "have not asked the question whether they had a proper theological doctrine of the Bible to substitute for the fundamentalist one which had been refuted...." Being concerned about the inevitable results of all this for the Christian believer, who must nourish his religious life on the Bible and must have it as the standard and rule for his faith, Cunliffe-Jones has set out to write this book. The book merely presents the problem and does not attempt to contain all the answers. It is not the book which needs to be written on the authority of the Bible; it is merely a preparation for it. However, it is warm, sane, and to the point. No one can question the high place which Jesus Christ has in the author's faith. Cunliffe-Jones accepts the conclusions of the historical critics of the last century. At heart, however, he is not a historical critic of the common present-day variety. He is

a believer in a supernatural revelation, who finds in Jesus Christ a Savior and Lord, and who looks for the coming of the Kingdom of God.

The chapters of the book bear the following titles: I. "The Principle of Authority;" II. "The Gospel, the Church, and the Bible;" III. "The Bible as Historical Literature;" IV. "The Interrelation of the Historical and Theological Study of the Bible;" V. "The Old Testament in the Light of the New;" VI. "The New Testament in the Light of the Old;" VII. "The History of Interpretation;" VIII. "The Meaning of the Canon;" IX. "The Bible and Tradition;" X. "The Bible and Natural Theology;" XI. "The Witness of the Holy Spirit;" XII. "The Bible as the Word of God;" XIII. "Jesus is Lord;"

Since this book is attempting only to state a principle rather than establish it, our comments will have to be on the general issues rather than on particular ones. The reviewer feels that the author is attempting a noble, and yet impossible, thing. He is attempting to harmonize two basic *religious* attitudes toward the Bible which are mutually exclusive.

Cunliffe-Jones wishes to accept the findings of historical criticism as the disclosure of the human element involved in God's giving and man's receiving a supernatural revelation. That we all owe liberal scholarship a debt of gratitude for pointing out to us the *sitz im leben* of Biblical ideas is granted. But it is doubted whether the historical critic would accept such a limited rôle as his own. The historical critic of the last century, of the liberal variety, wishes to rule out the supernatural origin of Israel's religion as *a priori* inadmissible, an assumption Cunliffe-Jones does not make, and one which means all the difference in the world to his thesis. Biblical criticism is not simply pointing out the historical setting for Biblical ideas; it also purposes to show how Biblical ideas have a natural origin rather than a supernatural one. In this light, Cunliffe-Jones does not accept Historical Criticism *in toto* as he claims to do. To the author of this volume, the Bible contains and bears witness to the gospel of

God which is a supernatural revelation to man. It is a revelation to man from God which is final authority for the Christian. The human element (the findings of historical criticism) is worthwhile only for educational purposes. The divine revelation to which the Bible attests is more than educational, it is final and binding upon all men, since it is the authoritative word from God as to His will, nature, and purpose for man.

One other major problem arises in the reading of this little volume. On what basis does one separate the historical authority found in the Bible (the human element) from the final authority which it presents (the divine element)? Cunliffe-Jones would say it was Jesus Christ. But this does not go far enough. *Whose* Jesus Christ? The Jesus Christ of *which* school of critics? Historical Criticism is simply a tool which all truth-searching men will use, and the conclusions one finds depend upon one's basic assumptions as well as a conscientious respect for the scientific attitude. To this Cunliffe-Jones can only answer: the Jesus Christ of the historical critics of the "Church." But the Church in what period of her development, and if the present is meant, what group of scholars within her borders? The problem, then, of finding the touchstone by which one can distinguish the historical accretions in the Bible from the divine revelation, is a very crucial one and one as yet unsolved by Cunliffe-Jones and others who follow this neo-orthodox doctrine of both-and.

ROBERT P. SHULER, JR.

Selected Mystical Writings of William Law, by Stephen Hobhouse. New York: Harper & Bros., 1948. 425 pages. \$5.00.

The reader of this collection of Law's little known writings will receive a distinct shock if he has formed his opinion of Law solely on the basis of the *Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*. Hobhouse points out that the *Serious Call* cannot be classified as mystical literature at all, and Law's title, "the greatest English

prose mystic," depends largely upon his later and more obscure mystical treatises, the most important of which have been selected for this volume.

Any of Law's works other than the *Serious Call* are next to impossible to find at the present time. Thus Hobhouse has done church historians and theologians a distinct service by collecting select passages of his mystical writings for the first time under one cover.

Not only does this book present the best of the thought of William Law, but it is carefully edited; and copious notes incorporating material from his predecessors, Jakob Boehme and many Catholic mystics, give perspective to the selections. Perhaps the most valuable feature of this volume is the section which incorporates twenty-four short studies of the subjects treated in Law's mystical writings. In these studies, Hobhouse presents his personal notes derived from extensive and intensive study of the selections, which betray a wealth of historical background from which Hobhouse skillfully draws in order to orient the work of Law himself. To the interested pastor, professor, or student who is much too busy to analyze seriously the almost unobtainable works of Law, these notes will prove an invaluable aid and guide.

The Selected Mystical Writings of William Law will probably not enjoy a phenomenal popular sale; yet it is a volume worthy of perusal by anyone who is particularly interested in mysticism, and the history of Christian thought. Let no one be misled into thinking that this writer who so profoundly influenced Wesley's life by his *Serious Call* will be found in agreement with the founder of Methodism upon the basis of the selections incorporated in this volume. The fact of the matter is that Wesley abhorred Law's "immoral" universalism in matters pertaining to salvation; his omission of justification from the factors involved in atonement; his extreme subjectivism; and his weakened concept of God as a result of his stress upon the Fatherhood of Christ. Likewise, Law objected strenuously to the fervor of the Methodist revival. These and

other elements which may prove distasteful to the reader are usually indicated in the notes and studies. This volume is, however, a "must" for anyone whose interests lead him to the study of English mystical prose.

—PAUL F. ABEL.

A Call To What Is Vital, by Rufus M. Jones. New York: Macmillan, 1948. 143 pages. \$2.00.

The contemporary decline of interest in religion has moved many to ponder its causes, and a few to prescribe a remedy. This volume of the late Rufus M. Jones embodies a prescription, which comes to us as his final credo. The author views the shrinking of interest in religion, accompanying as it does the extension of scientific investigation, as the result of the inner weakness of our current understanding of the essential character of the Christian faith. And whatever the cause for the waning hold of Christianity upon educated men, he views the phenomenon as a tragic one.

Jones has long been regarded as a chronicler of the Mystic Way. In the book under consideration he does not seek to traverse again the historic ground of mystical study. In Chapter V, entitled "Mystical Experience," he records the witness of a number of his own age and generation who experienced the upflow of new life, the inrush of the *élan* of life. His emphasis in this section is upon the recreative and exhilarating function of the mystical experience. From this Jones moves on to his view that in all periods, there have been "rare, unique persons" who "exhibit powers of influence and of action beyond the range of everything mapped out and explained" Moreover, he allows that science has gone much too far in its claim to have explored all limits. His caution to the scientist is, that there are vast areas of life not yet explored, and that all will be well advised to be cautious in asserting what can or cannot occur in these areas.

This is of a piece with the purpose of the volume, namely that of making a place

in a world thought to be the sole hunting-ground of the scientist for a God who is at the same time a transcendent Being and a pervasive Spirit. So far so good. When Jones comes, however, to discussing what and how we may know of God, he finds himself confronted with the existence of the Scriptures.

In this volume Jones' concern for biblical interpretation is much more marked than in his previous works. His interpretation of the history of Hebrew thought grows out of his view that "In the sixth century before Christ there came one of those strange mutation-epochs of history, when across the whole world came a succession of great revealers that has hardly any parallel." (p. 20) He climaxes his survey of the Old Testament with a panegyric to "the unknown prophet . . . this unique genius of the Exile," meaning of course deuterio-Isaiah. Such questions as the multiple authorship of Isaiah, the composite character of the Pentateuch, or the second-century origin of the Book of Daniel, seem to Jones to be closed—he never once hints that there might be any legitimate questions raised concerning these positions. Rather he dogmatically suggests that these "may now be taken as settled historical conclusions, as certain as anything we know about the past." (p. 97)

Concerning the New Testament, he is equally dogmatic in his assertion that "No Gospels were in circulation until after St. Paul's death. They were not written, as we now have them, by members of the first group of disciples" (p. 113) Concerning the objective reliability of the Gospels, and especially the Fourth Gospel, he suggests that "there is no way to get back to the firsthand facts, to the original data." (p. 116) Nor will all be satisfied by his assertion that "What happened at Pentecost was not that these first Christians were endowed with the capacity to speak the foreign languages which they had never learned, but that on this occasion they passed over from a visible, tangible head to an invisible guiding presence." (p. 122)

It seems to this reviewer regrettable that in a volume which has proved to be the valedictory to Rufus M. Jones' long and influential life, there is such a doctrinaire statement of the results of biblical criticism, at least some of which are recognized by other scholars to be tentative. Nor is his case improved by his assumption that a total concession at the point of the question of the supernatural will render the Bible more acceptable to scientific men.

Taken in the overall, the volume is disappointing. The reader who is nostalgic for the usual platitudes by which liberals have customarily depreciated historic Christianity should read the book. He will find most of the old favorites there. The chief positive value of the work is its general recognition of the reality of the super-temporal world, the realm of Spirit. Possibly some may be helped to faith through its very tentativeness.

—HAROLD B. KUHN.

The Creator and the Adversary, by Edwin Lewis. Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1948, 279 pages. \$3.00.

In 1905 Olin Alfred Curtis, Professor of Systematic Theology at Drew published *The Christian Faith* as a system of doctrine "personally given." It utilized the insights and nomenclature of contemporary science—psychology and sociology to restate an evangelical view of Christian belief. The present book likewise is a restatement of Christian belief personally given; it is both a reflection of the author's spiritual odyssey and an attempt to "justify the ways of God to men." It presents "an evangelical interpretation of the Christian faith in terms of conflict." The author, having turned from philosophical monism to revelation, now sets forth a metaphysical pluralism as an attempted explanation of the problem of evil.

The confluence of many streams of thought is discernible throughout the volume. An extensive reading of literature, Platonic idealism, Brightman's explanation

of evil, the Reformation doctrine of revelation, and Bergson's version of creative evolution, and the current emphasis on "demonology" among dialectical theologians are among the more obvious ones. In the nineteen chapters one may detect the philosopher, the theologian, the man of letters, and the Christian preacher-prophet, earnestly seeking a synthesis of reason, experience, and revelation.

At the heart of the presentation is the thesis of a pluralistic universe in which a constant struggle between good and evil is being waged. The object of the struggle is the possession of man-soul. "There are three eternals, the divine, the demonic, and the residue, the residue being a constant"—like the "potentiality" of Aristotle or the "non-being" of Plato. (p. 142). The divine and the demonic are in perpetual conflict, not directly but through the medium of this "residual constant" which is eternal and uncreated. The function of the Creator is creativity, of the Adversary is discreativity, of this third eternal entity is noncreativity. Only through the "residual constant" can Life become individual lives. It can only be described in terms of its function and remains as "the permanent possibility of emperic actualities." (p. 143) While the sources for this concept may be sought among the Greek philosophers one wishes that the author had propounded this crucial concept at greater length. The framework of Lewis' cosmology is the doctrine of organic evolution as refined by Bergson, to this theory reference is made constantly as an axiomatic truth. Hence, the author is compelled to reject the natural interpretation of the Genesis story as unacceptable to twentieth century mentality. The Biblical account of creation therefore, is symbolic, not historical. In the creation "myth" (euphemistically labelled "mythus") Adam is typical, not determinative. (p. 130). Creation, as illuminated by modern science, was a long, slow, painful process, of which the Creator was only the initiator.

Two other familiar concepts rejected are the sovereignty and omniscience of God.

Finitude is preferred to sovereignty because God's goodness is more important than His power and he feels compelled to choose one or the other; also he finds Aristotle's spectator-God less realistic and helpful than God regarded as a fellow-traveller and fellow-sufferer. The author's acknowledged indebtedness to Brightman and Wm. James is here apparent. An attempt to explain how a finite God could still be God would have been exceedingly appropriate. No attempt appears to have been made to distinguish between a self-limitation and a limitation that is necessitated.

The author also calls for a revised anthropology. Both Augustine and Palagius were extremists. Man is not as free as the latter supposed, since biological, and cultural factors so severely limit freedom. Sin is not necessary and yet is inevitable! This vulnerable point could well have been elaborated for the benefit of those less skilled in dialectics. Little attempt is made to resolve the inconsistency between naturalistic determinism inherent in the doctrine of evolution and the claim that man is truly free. Nor is there an answer to Caelestus' insistence that what is natural and inevitable cannot justly be called sin.

Disciples of Augustine fare but little better. Lewis finds that the Scriptural basis for the doctrine of original sin (Romans 5-8) has been misinterpreted. Paul speaks of "Adam", not as the first of the human race but as any man—rather "he is every man." No cognizance is taken of Paul's main point in introducing Adam, viz., to show how Christ stands in a unique relation to humanity, as Saviour, in a manner analagous to Adam's relation to the race as a sinner. Thus, Romans 5-8 is circumvented in a four-fold manner; Paul has been misinterpreted, Paul was mistaken in regarding Adam as historical, when any portion of the Bible cannot be reconciled to John 3:16 it is to be discredited, and no revelation can be acceptable if at variance with the "facts of experience." (p. 21). Original righteousness is also denied. If Adam had been "perfect" he could not have been tempted. Apparent-

ly the author has but one definition of perfection—that of absolute perfection, and does not recognize that several Biblical characters are described as “perfect”, yet were temptable. Neither does he explain how Jesus could have been tempted. Apparently Jesus was not “perfect,” or he was not tempted.

Since sin is inevitable, since Adam is not to be blamed for sin, and since the Creator is not to blame, the chief cause for sin is the Adversary, whose power and omnipresence have been greatly underestimated. Like Niebuhr, C. S. Lewis, and others, our author has the devil’s number! The term “devil” is not used; however, except in quotation, hence the discussion preserves an air of philosophical respectability. The Bible and all literature of the western world are ransacked to illustrate the perpetual conflict between these two. Much in the volume suggests the dualism of Zoroaster and the Gnostics. The background of cosmological conflict would have been quite acceptable to the Greek-Christian apologists of the second century. Here Lewis is biblical except in the matter of emphasis. Like most heresies the error is not so much an untruth as a *distortion* of perspective and emphasis. While the Bible does allude to the duel between Jehovah and Satan the emphasis is on *man’s* stubbornness and unbelief. Projecting the conflict into a metaphysical realm is unscriptural and relieves man of responsibility. While no indebtedness is acknowledged the theory of atonement here reflected has some resemblance to the “fish-hook” theory of Gregory of Nyssa. Indeed, the word “hook” is used in describing the Adversary’s defeat at Calvary! (p. 156).

Like the Christian philosophers of Alexandria Lewis is too philosophical to accept the literal interpretation of Scripture and too much of a Christian to reject it. Hence, like the disciples of Philo and Origen he endeavors to enhance the values of Biblical revelation by resort to allegorization. The Fourth Gospel, in accordance with recent (not current) fashion in critical scholarship, is regarded as a reconstruction of

gospel history. It dramatizes the conflict between light and darkness, culminating in the triumph of the Light of the world. The wedding at Cana is symbolical of the Adversary’s designs on the integrity of the home. The water represents the world; the wine represents heaven; Christ’s presence transforms the commonplace into the divine. The story of the woman at the well is a lesson on race prejudice. By the aid of Luke 7:2-10 the “nobleman” of John 5:46-54 is transformed into a centurion and the “miracle” symbolizes the spiritual impotence of the Roman state. Attention is nowhere drawn to John’s own statement of purpose—that of *inspiring belief* in Jesus as the Son of God. (John 20:31).

Notwithstanding these and other defects the volume has many merits. There is a profound moral earnestness and courage in facing the problem of evil. The author’s conclusions are less objectionable than his premises and methods of defending his thesis. The lack of documentation is not objectionable although it is difficult to explain why Proverbs 20:27 is quoted as “the sayings of the mystics” with no indication of its original source. The treatise abounds with profound and sound Christian insights. The style is very readable. The author’s success in keeping the cross central in the whole plan of redemption is commendable, as is his exaltation of the work of Christ. A wholesome championing of the prophetic, as compared with the priestly element in Christianity, will be appreciated by many. There is a recognition that salvation should not end with the individual but that a concern of the whole man for the whole of all men is imperative. There are many passages of great discernment and power, many epigrams that are worth quoting.

Liberals will object to its demonology, and the disparagement of humanism. Evangelicals will object chiefly to the manner of using the Bible: the decisive place for the subjective factor in evaluating its message, a tendency to use the Bible for illustrative material for a previously worked out doctrine, rather than as a source of

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observe the trends from this vantage-point and watch current developments carefully.

Ministers should note the attention the author gives to Reformation influences on church music, the rise of the chorale and responsorial and antiphonal singing. Its direct relation to increased congregational participation in the service. His treatment is brief in this regard, but informative.

Sachs defines the church modes exceptionally well for the uninitiated, and pictures clearly the vertical character of harmony and the horizontal nature of melody—a basic fact in all understanding of music.

Our contemporary problem, he says, is the bridging of the gap between composers and actual or potential audience. We agree with him that this problem is extant, but are left with a feeling of futility as to the future except through the cold medium of science (notably electronics) as far as he is concerned. It is, of course, not his business to predict in this case, but we wonder whether composers of practically every era were able to establish satisfactory contact with their public if they really contributed toward musical progress. This we are left to decide for ourselves, and his note is not optimistic. His closing comment, however, does revive the hope which belongs to the soul of music as a creative process: "The history of music is not a random sequence of persons or forms but a history of the human mind."

Sixteen excellent plates and extensive topical bibliographies add signally to the worth of this ambitious work. It is significant enough to say that it not just another history book.

—JOHN S. TREMAINE.

The Pursuit of God, by A. W. Tozer.
Harrisburg, Pa: Christian Publications, Inc., 1948. 128 pages. \$1.50.

The Christian world had an indication of the direction in which this author's thought was moving in his review of Fenelon's *Christian Perfection* in the *Alliance Weekly* for May 10, 1947. In the review, Tozer noted the decadence of both contemporary

Fundamentalism and of the "Deeper Life" movements. At this point he expressed regret that "for two generations [the leaders have] written books which have been read by those who in turn wrote other books copied after the ones they had read, and so the circle goes around and around . . . on a descending spiral." (*Op. cit.*, p. 295.)

The Pursuit of God seeks to take this situation by the horns. It begins with an analysis of the causes for the barrenness of the lives of many Christians, attributing this to superficiality of much of our current Christian practice. Tozer is a sharp critic of much of our contemporary popular evangelism, particularly at the point of its stereotyped method, and its forensic approach to faith. He protests the "cloudy vagueness" in the approach of multitudes of professing Christians to the questions of the Creed, knowledge of God, prayer and the like.

The volume deals in succession with a series of steps designed to restore the vigor and reality of the Christian's relation to his God: "Following Hard after God," "The Blessedness of Possessing Nothing," "Removing the Veil," "Apprehending God" and the like. The arrangement of these reminds one forcibly of the "Stages" by which the advocates of the Inner Life of other days sought to lead others into the steps of Christ. Underlying the method of the book is the author's conviction that God is forever seeking to manifest Himself to us. Thus, Tozer seeks to outline the steps by which man may relate himself to God's self-disclosure, and thus attain certainty at the point of the fact of The Universal Presence. The crucial step in this process is the identification of the human will with the divine Will—in short, total consecration.

Here is an addition to the literature of Christian sanctity, written by one who is not avowedly in the Wesleyan tradition, and who at the same time has the objective of Christian Perfection in mind. Some may feel that he is not sufficiently clear in the statement of his objectives. At the same time, there is a warmth and freshness

in his approach which renders his volume challenging to the person who desires to adjust his life to the "good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

—HAROLD B. KUHN.

The Date of Ezra's Coming to Jerusalem, by J. Stafford Wright. London: Tyndale Press, 1947. 32 pages. 2/6 or 50 cents.

This is one of a series of monographs by the Tyndale Press (39 Bedford Square, London) and comprises the Tyndale Old Testament Lecture, delivered on January 3, 1947 in Westminster by the Senior Tutor of Oak Hill Theological College in London. Wright deals with the moderate alternatives to Charles Cutler Torrey's more radical view that Ezra was a fictitious character, created by the Chronicler as a priestly foil to the secular Nehemiah. These alternatives have been proposed by Van Hoonacker and by L. W. Batten, and have been accepted, in general at least, by Oesterly & Robinson in *The History of Israel*, and by Wheeler Robinson.

The tendency of these men is to date Ezra *after* Nehemiah, and to put him in line of Johanan the high priest, assigning the date of his work to near the end of the fifth century B.C. Wright treats the subject as follows: first, he shows the intrinsic improbability of the radical modern 'reconstruction'. Second, he analyzes minutely the passages which seem to support the priority of Nehemiah over Ezra. Third, he develops the constructive probability for the traditional view, showing that the difficulties in this are not so great as many scholars think.

He defends, notably, three views: first, the probability of Ezra's arrival in Jerusalem about 458; second, the rigor of Nehemiah in the matter of mixed marriages (in this the sentimentalists will revolt, and find a throwback to the 'primitive' methods of the tenth century); and third, the consistency of the Chronicler's account. Dealing with the problem of Nehemiah's relative silence concerning Ezra, Wright believes

Ezra may have had a period of disfavor, followed by a restoration to favor, signalled by Nehemiah 12.

The conclusion of the writer is that the modern reconstruction is greatly forced, and that it has grave internal difficulties. Against this, the order set forth by the Chronicler is defended as being both self-consistent and consistent with all that we know of external history. The moderation and ability of our writer are such as to beget confidence in his findings. Students of Bible history will appreciate the table of the Kings of Persia in the Appendix.

—HAROLD B. KUHN.

Christianity and Communism, by John C. Bennett. New York: Association Press, 1948. 128 pp. \$1.50.

This volume comprises an introductory statement on the relation between Christianity and Communism. The author notes the nature of Communism, the social imperative of Christianity, some main issues between the two ways of life, and the major alternatives to Communism.

In dealing with the nature of Communism the author points out that it appeals to the masses, in part, because it promises a new social-economic order. He shows that Communism represents a total philosophy of life seeking to develop authoritative answers to many questions with which Christianity has dealt. The author also notes that Communism is highly revolutionary in method.

Professor Bennett states that Christianity challenges Communism on the following fundamental issues: (1) the view of atheistic absolutism; (2) the Communistic method of dealing with opponents; and (3) the ultimate status of persons.

The author believes that Christianity has an adequate social imperative for the social-economic problems of the present generation. He holds that the basis of this imperative is seen in (1) God's purpose for his creation and (2) the meaning of Christian love. In dealing with Capitalism the author first notes some of the advan-

tages of a capitalistic society and then turns to note its limitations.

The author believes that "Communism as a faith and as a system of thought is a compound of half-truth and positive error." He holds that Communism as a movement of power is a real threat to personal and political freedom and that Christians should resist its extension throughout the world. The author maintains that the errors of Communism are largely due to the failure of Christians, and Christian churches, "to be true to the revolutionary implications of their own faith".

The author seeks to be objective in his

treatment of Communism. He clearly points out some of the absurd assumptions and groundless expectations of that movement. He graphically and vigorously upbraids its ruthless treatment of political enemies. He condemns its materialistic philosophy. But, on the other hand, he seeks to understand and appreciate what values there may be in a Communistic way of life.

The volume is highly readable and well organized. It was written primarily for young people. It will serve as a good primer for persons wishing a short introductory statement of the Church's concern with Communism. —W. C. MAVIS.

(Continued from page 159)

His chief contribution to the field of philosophy seems, therefore, to be his emphasis upon mental pioneering in a day when thought had lagged behind action. Possibly some vigorous voice was needed in his day, to disengage the thought of the new America from the lingering shackles of the Old World. In his emphasis at this point Emerson is of course definitely dated. It seems to this writer that Emerson's

crowning blunder was his assertion (often beautifully worded) that old revelations were superannuated, together with his optimistic prediction that new ones would shortly be forthcoming. At this point he destroyed without adequate reason to expect a rebuilding. His work should serve today as a warning against accepting content as valid simply because it is well expressed, and more important still, against mistaking a sage for a prophet.