

# Book Reviews

*The Creative Mind.* By Henri Bergson. (Translated by Mabelle L. Andison.) New York: Philosophical Library, 1946. 307 pages. \$3.75.

Philosophical Library has rendered a service in publishing a series of essays, dealing with philosophical method, by the late Henri Bergson. All but the first two were published before, between 1903 and 1926, but were in French and out of print. The two introductory essays at the beginning of the volume are now published for the first time and afford an introduction to this volume and to the author's philosophical system. These are significant chiefly for their autobiographical interest and the light they shed on the early development of Bergson's thought. One does not find therefore the maturity of thought that is best seen in his later book, *Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, (1935).

The new essays describe the author's admiration of Spencer's philosophical system and his dissatisfaction with his method; he found Spencer's doctrine of evolution blind to the nature of change itself and in need of recasting (p. 13). Along with this he was disturbed by the complete lack of precision in philosophy and sought to define more accurately the concepts of time and space. He found that they are generally confused so the "when we evoke time, it is space which answers the call." Ambiguity of language he found responsible for the equating of time and space and discovered that duration, transition, process is the elusive concept which leads to a discovery of reality. When

considering duration the mind ordinarily thinks only of fixed points in a sequence, "immobilities, real or possible, . . . simple snapshots we have taken once again along the course of change. (p. 16). He concludes that it is "the continuity of transition," flux, "change itself that is real." Logic or intellection is too bound to the past; it must be made more supple in order to grasp the present, the immediate, the factual.

Bergson found that intellectual intuition, "the direct vision of the mind by the mind," rather than reason alone, is the path to certainty. While Kant said the "thing in itself" escapes us because we do not possess an intuitive faculty to comprehend it, Bergson insisted that "at least part of reality, our person, can be grasped in its natural purity." Thus he felt that he had found the way to achieve more precision in philosophical method.

As William James pointed out Bergson's style, even in translation, is remarkable for lucidity of expression. Like Aristotle he surveys all his predecessors and asserts his superior insight and accuracy. Like Kant his earlier writings are more provocative and original than his later ones in which a more cautious and conservative attitude is discerned. In his later books he apparently makes a greater effort to come to terms with traditional Christianity. The influence of Heraclitus and Zeno on Bergson's mental development is apparent in this intellectual autobiography. Like his contemporary William James he revolted against the fixed intellectualism of his day and like James and Whitehead he went from science into

philosophy. While insisting upon the discipline of the scientific method he does not stop until the nature of things is perceived by direct insight or experience.

While many sentences and epigrams of Bergson are attractive the total picture is disappointing. The lack of precision which he deplores in philosophy seems to characterize his own verbiage. He is perhaps more the creature of his age than the pioneer of a new one. In revolting against a static intellectual universe he has gone to the other extreme of deifying flux. Reality is to be found in the static as well as in the dynamic; both are equally essential.

More valuable are his counsels on educational procedure. He pleads for the inductive method in public education, saying that manual training should be intellectual discipline as well as relaxation. "Bookish learning represses valuable creative urges." (p. 102). The teacher's task is to stir up initiative. Valuable also is his insistence, in Platonic fashion, that direct insight is won only at the price of the most arduous intellectual discipline in the exact sciences. By insisting that philosophy be more precise, that it welcome the intuitive as well as the intellectual, and in showing that science should go beyond description to interpretation, he has suggested the possibility of a better synthesis between these two disciplines. Any effort to make philosophy less intellectually complacent and science more aware of its limitations should be interesting to religion.

GEORGE A. TURNER

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*The Meaning of Sanctification*, by Charles Ewing Brown. Anderson, Indiana: The Warner Press, 1944. 232 pages. \$2.00.

In the opinion of the reviewer this title is one of the finest on the subject

to appear in recent years. It is not written for the scholar primarily nor is it intended as a polemic; it "is not written to give battle, but to give light" as the author expresses it. It is written for Christians to help answer intellectual difficulties and afford practical guidance in understanding and expounding the doctrine and experience. The viewpoint frankly is Wesleyan and in harmony with the Arminian branch of the modern holiness movement. Within these limits the author may be said to have abundantly fulfilled his stated purpose in writing. While popular and practical in style the background of careful scholarship is everywhere apparent. There is also noticeable a spiritual insight, maturity, and sanity which inspires confidence. While little originality is claimed or desired there is a freshness of treatment throughout. The author takes cognizance of some Jewish literature outside the canon and indicates acquaintance with theological thought apart from the Wesleyan tradition. This is used effectively to enforce and enrich the writer's Wesleyan interpretation.

From the standpoint of pure scholarship assumptions are sometimes made that would be unacceptable to many. In most instances however the author treads carefully and indicates an awareness of the critical problems involved. Most important of all the reviewer has not noticed any instances where evidence was consciously or unconsciously distorted in the interest of a theological position. The material could probably have been organized in a more orderly plan, but perfection is not claimed in this respect and the organization is no worse than most others on the same subject. In parts of the book one wishes that a clearer distinction had been drawn between the Biblical meaning and the theological traditions that have subsequently developed.

The author is Associate Professor of Theology in Anderson College and Theological Seminary. He is also Editor in Chief of *The Gospel Trumpet*, official organ of The Church of God, having as its purpose, "the salvation of sinners, entire sanctification of believers, divine healing of the body, and the unity of all true Christians in 'the faith once delivered to the saints'."

In several places the author expresses some fairly original viewpoints. For instance, issue is taken with Sangster's statement that instincts cannot be sinful. Brown insists that these primary urges have been infected as a result of Adam's sin; the original pattern is distorted by selfish motives, resulting in infection with a sinful condition analogous to fever in the body. What is needed therefore is not something to be extracted so much as a diseased condition rectified. (p. 93). He again defends tradition against Sangster's criticism of sin as "a thing" by noting that in the New Testament, as in Wesley, such language is admittedly figurative rather than analytical or descriptive. (p. 97). Following a suggestion from Bergson, Brown maintains that temptations are present even to the sanctified because of man's high level of intelligence. Man's complex behaviour patterns have been broken up by the expansion of the intellect and even a holy man finds "a tension in deciding against personal selfish impulses in favor of his godly moral instincts." (p. 91). Perhaps Brown has here been influenced too much by Bergson. How could "the moral image of God" be an instinct (p. 92)? What is the difference between "instinct" and "impulse" in man (p. 91)?

Like W. B. Pope this author finds that Reformation creeds were under the influence of Manicheism in their refusal to admit the possibility of complete deliverance from sin in this

life. (p. 153). Valuable also, among other things, is the emphasis on the positive aspect of holiness and the insistence that consecration means investment.

While not intended as such, because of its clear, sound, and judicious presentation of the Wesleyan message, the book is perhaps as valuable for apologetic as for devotional purposes.

GEORGE A. TURNER

*Philosophy In American Education—Its Tasks and Opportunities.* Symposium. New York: Harper & Bros. Contributors: Brand, Blanshard, Swarthmore College; Curt J. Ducasse, Brown University; Charles W. Hendel, Yale University; Arthur E. Murphy, University of Illinois; Max C. Otto, University of Wisconsin.

Early in 1943 a proposal was made to the American Philosophical Association that they undertake an investigation of the present status of philosophy, and of the part philosophy might play in a post-war world. The Rockefeller Foundation awarded a generous grant to the Association for such a study, and the volume, here reviewed, is the outgrowth of the inquiry. The five contributors to the book were the ones appointed to the task. They followed a procedure of counseling, conferences, correspondence, and every other available avenue of contact. Those consulted were teachers, members of the American Philosophical Association, scholars in other fields of learning, poets, editors, lawyers, clergymen, educators in public schools and junior colleges, administrators, business men, government officials, etc. A wealth of critical observation piled up, which serves as the background for this symposium.

The book is divided into three main divisions with two or more of the writers presenting their particular

viewpoints in each. The first division deals with the contemporary situation—the present status of American philosophy. Dr. Blanshard asserts that philosophy in the schools is flourishing as never before, and its influence extends far beyond the walls of the classroom, but he feels that it does not hold the place of importance it should have. It is a commonplace that philosophy was once the “Queen of the sciences,” but today it has been pushed from its central position by recent, more aggressive curricular material.

The primary reason for the present survey is that liberal education has been open to question as a result of the war. We have a wealth of educative materials and tools, but is this mass of knowledge integrated? Can the immature learner find his way through the maze of course selections to clear sighted goals? Many of the severest criticisms come from educators themselves. The demands on educators and particularly philosophers is that they provide (1) an integrated program, (2) a unity in education, (3) a reinterpretation of democracy, and (4) an adequate philosophy of life. Many other demands were expressed, but the above were the most insistent ones.

An issue frequently expressed concerned the nature of philosophy itself. Is its function to reveal the nature of things, to put into operation principles of goodness, truth, beauty, etc., or is it an agency of adjustment, an instrument for molding nature into the service of desire?

Too many times philosophers have been criticized for their “ivory tower” seclusion. They have remained aloof from the objective realities of the world's needs. We cannot but admire the writer for his review of the criticisms that have been hurled against his profession.

In the survey of the present status, Arthur E. Murphy presents a review

of contemporary philosophy in the American colleges. He discusses such topics as “Speculative Idealism,” “Pragmatism,” “Realism,” and the place of “isms” in modern thought. His plea is for a philosophic saturation for every college student.

In the second division of the book, each writer contributes a chapter on the task of philosophy. A picture of the modern philosopher is drawn for us. The criticisms, just and unjust, are examined carefully, but his place of leadership among scholarly thinkers is carefully safeguarded. In the chapter entitled “The Opportunity of Philosophy” the emphasis is put on the need for some unifying influence on the selection of courses for the college student. There is a growing feeling that the vocations and fields of specialization have tended to develop insular thinking; philosophy could and *should* offset this by utilizing its resources of integrative values. The other writers of this section continue in the same vein; a plea for philosophy's place in the sun.

Today there is the feel of academic stirrings in the direction of curricular rebuilding. Most of our colleges and universities are contemplating more or less radical changes; some are already far ahead in a reconstruction program. At least three reasons account for this: (1) The war made major changes in teaching staffs and student bodies; (2) Financial limitations have forced sharp reductions in the breadth of course selections; (3) The impact of contemporary criticisms is making curricular changes imperative.

In the third section of the book the authors present an excellent pattern for the liberal arts college and graduate school. The program outlined lays special stress on unity and integration. The place of philosophy as a subject, and its various divisions—ethics, logic, metaphysics, etc., are discussed. The relationships between

philosophy and the humanities, the sciences, arts and letters are thoroughly presented. To be sure, much of the proposed revision is quite nebulous in outline; also, there are some differences and disagreements; but all in all, the pattern for curriculum building suggested, could, by any educational group, be considered with profit.

HILDRETH CROSS

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*Christ and Man's Dilemma*, by George A. Buttrick. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1946. 224 pp. \$2.00.

The Reverend George Arthur Buttrick has produced in his *Christ and Man's Dilemma* one of the outstanding religious books of the year. This most recent volume from the pen of the author of such previous studies as *The Parables of Jesus*, *Jesus Came Preaching*, *The Christian Fact and Modern Doubt*, and *Prayer* strikes the same high level of literary and religious excellence as is found in his other volumes. With thorough-going and deep spiritual insight the dilemma in which modern man finds himself is set forth on the one hand, while on the other hand the complete adequacy of Christ to meet man's entire needs is presented. And this Christ is none other than God Incarnate who must needs suffer the death of the cross and who rose again. The Incarnation, the death, and the resurrection are among the essentials for Dr. Buttrick.

Man's dilemma grows out of these facts concerning him; he is ignorant, he is wicked, he is mortal. As for his ignorance, it is constitutional. The basic questions of life are unanswerable by him. His science and philosophy, though making valuable contribution, come far short in ultimate solutions. Man in his ignorance desires a revelation. That revelation has come to him in Jesus Christ who is God incarnate. It is the Christ who is presented in the New Testament, One

who claimed *unique authority*, who is *ultimate truth*, *ultimate love*, and who claimed to *forgive sin*.

As for his wickedness, man is aware of it, but at the same time is unable in himself to effect any release from it. The losses incurred by our wickedness are beyond man's power to adequately compute. Sin *sears the memory*, *cankers the will* and is of such a nature that human responsibility cannot be evaded. In its inner tyranny and outer ruin, sin is beyond our power to cure. Therefore, only God can redeem our wickedness, and in this work of redemption, God must come to earth and suffer, which He did in Jesus. The redemptive act of God calls for a response on the part of the redeemed in *faith and life*.

Though our modern age may try to escape from the dilemma of mortality by various devices, the fact still remains that man is mortal. Man is aware of his mortality and yet there is within him an instinctiveness of a certain deathlessness. The New Testament with its emphasis upon a resurrected Christ is the answer that is needed. And the New Testament does not simply set forth immortality as continued existence, but rather as *eternal life*, life that has been redeemed from sin. The Christian doctrine of the hereafter is inseparable from the Christian doctrine of atonement.

In Chapter V our author finds that the ignorance, sin, and mortality which plague our humanity, enter as well into man's business relationships. Business, being human, has its ignorances, wickednesses, and mortality; for man impresses upon all his enterprises the dilemma of his own life. And Christ as redeemer, Christ in the individual business man is the only salvation for business. Man must be made good at heart if he is to do good in life's relationships. Motive in business as elsewhere must be love toward Jesus Christ.

In his discussion of *Christ and Education*, our author finds that education in America has become secular, largely as a result of our traditional doctrine of separation of church and state and a fear of religious indoctrination. This fear has brought about a silence concerning God and Jesus in secular education, which has "indoctrinated children to believe that God does not exist and that Jesus Christ does not matter."

Secular education, while professing great faith in facts and priding itself in "objective mind" has its own assumptions concerning God, Christ, and man. God is disregarded, Christ may or may not have lived, and man needs only to be set free for he is sufficient in himself. As to the conflict between authoritarian education and free education, Dr. Buttrick points out that the universe is authoritarian yet freedom is honored—within limits. Any sound education is both authoritarian and free.

The "hidden assumptions" of secular education concerning God, Christ, and man are unacceptable to our author. God cannot be disregarded in any sane education. "Christ cannot be dismissed except at our bitter cost." Man is not born free in any absolute sense. Relativism in morals has been the logical result of disregard for authority.

Toward a solution of the problem which confronts us, due to secularism in education, the author suggests that the Church and the home must do a better and more extensive service in Christian education. The center of the education process in which the Church and home engages must be Christ, Son of Man and Son of God.

The closing chapter of the book deals with man's response. The crux of this response is faith. The author's analysis of faith will not be altogether satisfactory to all readers, for the faith which brings salvation is quite

unique and does not lend itself well by way of comparison with faith in other areas of life. The faith which is man's response is not only a single, separated act but is also a *life faith* and is generated by prayer.

Faith, however, is not man's only response. Daily action is also essential. Faith and prayer must be translated into and supported by deeds which are Christian. It is "faith which works by love." It is works without which faith is dead.

*Christ and Man's Dilemma* should be read by every minister of the Gospel. It contains a stirring message for our day when secularism and sensate philosophy have almost usurped the field of modern thought. Conservative thinkers will rejoice in Dr. Buttrick's presentation.

W. D. TURKINGTON

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*The Theology of John Wesley: With special reference to the doctrine of justification*, by William R. Cannon. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1946. 284 pp. \$2.50.

It is a wholesome thing for scholars to re-examine the springs of a vital religious movement such as Methodism, for by doing so they can help prevent a lack of power due to ignorance of first principles. Dr. Cannon has presented us with a stimulating study of Wesley's theology, written with care and vigor. The treatment is largely objective, so that responsibility for the views set forth is placed upon Wesley himself. Certain comments, if taken alone, seem to carry at least a suggestion of the economic view of the Trinity, which is abroad in the land (pp. 161, 214).

Essentially, the work is sound. At Yale, this reviewer enjoyed Cannon's friendship while both were working on doctor's dissertations in somewhat related fields. He was known on the campus for his conservative position, as we understand he now is at Emory

University.

The manner in which Wesley's doctrines are placed against the background of Anglican and other views is especially worth while. Wesley's Aldersgate experience is pointed out as a turning point in his theology, being the point at which he personally grasped the way of salvation by faith. It is pointed out that, instead of a sterile theology, Wesley stood for a form of doctrine that led to a real change in the lives of men. This change is not at first so complete, however, as to free one from "all inward desires that are evil," which must be progressively overcome (p. 250).

Though not coming from the ranks of the holiness movement, and though centering on the doctrine of justification in this study, the author has seen the fact that in Wesley's view Christian perfection "is the free gift of God" (p. 242). The book ends with these words:

Justification, in the last analysis, is not superseded; it is transfigured and transformed, for the same Lord who is rich in mercy and plentiful in redemption is able also to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think and, according to the power that worketh in us, to deliver us from the bondage of sin and to make us conformable to the blessed image of his Son. (p. 254.)

The careful student of Wesley will value this book, which ranks favorably among the volumes written upon the subject of historic Methodism. Dr. Cannon deals with ideas rather than with the history of external facts, so that his work makes a welcome contribution to Wesleyan literature. It should be helpful to the serious student of Arminian literature in this day.

C. ELVAN OLMSTEAD

*Calvinism*, by A. Dakin. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1946. 223 pp. \$2.75.

There has come in our day a revival

of interest in Calvin and Calvinism. One reason for it is this: our world is bristling with problems, and many of them are the very ones Calvin wrestled with in his famous *Institutes*. A growing number of thinkers are turning to Calvinism for help and guidance as they strive to cope with these acute problems. Even though they may not be able to accept Calvin's proffered solutions they find in them many vigorous suggestions and a point of departure for their own thinking at least.

This interest is world-wide. In Hungary, France, Germany, Holland and elsewhere new biographies of Calvin, new translations of the *Institutes*, handbooks and commentaries have appeared. The most significant movement, signalling the revival of Calvinism, is, of course, Barthianism. "In and through Barth it is found that many of the fundamental notes of Calvin's theology are capable of modern statement in such a way as to win favorable consideration, and the question inevitably arises whether they are not of permanent value for Christian thinking."

The author sees a violent reaction from the theology which has developed "since the time when Arminianism triumphed over Calvinism." Since Wesley's day there has been a growing sentimentalism in religion with the emphasis upon the fatherhood of God and the idea of his love. Not that Arminianism or Wesleyanism were in any manner responsible for the rise of modernism, but they were perhaps landmarks in the progress towards the new outlook which made man the center of thought rather than God. This was reinforced by the nineteenth century idealism which expressed unlimited faith in man's ability. Other humanistic doctrines, such as the immanence of God, the idea that God is discoverable by the processes of thought without revelation, and that

religious experience can form an adequate basis of theology have led to an "interpretation of Christianity far removed from that of the New Testament."

The book is designed "to give a concise statement of what Calvinism is, and some indication of its influence." As such it is something of a commentary on the *Institutes*, an exposition of the doctrines and ethics of Christianity as interpreted by Calvin. To those who are instructed in the specific teachings of Calvinism, the doctrinal part may not be of paramount interest save as some of the traditional interpretations may here and there be somewhat revised.

Part Two deals with Calvinism as an ecclesiastical system in various lands. Geneva was the base, and this was regarded as the pattern for all new organizations to follow. But the master-plan was modified perforce as Calvinism adapted itself to varying conditions in other sections of Switzerland, Germany, the Netherlands, France, and the English-speaking world. The author does not exaggerate in saying that "it did much to teach ordinary men to organize, to set them to the task, and to supply them with guiding lines for it. For this, if for nothing more, Protestantism and the democracies of the world owe the Genevan Reformer an incalculable debt."

Part Three deals with some aspects of Calvinism. These include the Calvinistic view of Scripture, the principle of Authority in Calvinism, the Calvinistic way of life, and Calvinism and the social order. Many interesting and pertinent truths are discussed, some misapprehensions of Calvin's teaching are corrected, and some of his positions are freely criticised.

The author sees "affinities between the spirit and underlying aim of the Barthian theology and the social and political aspirations of the continent of Europe." If Barthianism should

come to terms with the political aspirations of our world, then "we might well see a revived Calvinism forming the theological background of a new constructive and international life."

WILDER R. REYNOLDS

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*Faith and Reason*, by Nels F. S. Ferré.  
New York: Harpers, 1946. xii, 251 pp. \$2.50.

This book, in the field of philosophy of religion, is the first volume of a projected work on "Reason and the Christian Faith" by the professor of Christian theology at Andover Newton Theological School. The second volume, soon to appear, will be entitled, "Faith, Society, and the Problem of Evil." The treatise before us is another attempt to reconcile faith and reason, this time a good one.

Since past methods and conclusions in science, philosophy, and religion are being questioned, the author pleads for a re-examination of all methods of knowing, in the light of all that we know. The dogmatic attitude has been self-defeating. One of the most serious flaws among thinkers is the "psychological tendency," i. e., "the natural temptation to identify one's profession and intellectual position with public prestige and/or inner security." (p. 54). For example, some religionists claim that the world is to be saved only by their particular way of salvation.

Chapter I assays to clarify the meanings and relationships between religion and reason. "Religion is our whole-reaction to what we consider to be most important and most real." (p. 5). Right reason is "the fullest and most consistent explanation of what is now and here actual based on the most thorough description of it and such reasoning beyond it as may be warranted by the facts found within what is here and now actual." (p. 22). The central problem of the book is



whether right reason and right whole-reaction do or can go together. Reason and religion, Ferré later in the book suggests, are ultimately indistinguishable.

The other three chapters, which with the first chapter comprise the main body of the volume, show the proper spheres and inter-relationships of the Circles of Science, Philosophy, and Religion respectively. Each of these areas must be carefully cultivated if we are to get at truth; for truth is like a field in which oats, rye, and wheat are to be harvested, each requiring its own peculiar threshing screen. The chapters on science and philosophy are the strongest. They are, too, the most readable. Thirteen logical and psychological "tendencies" are outlined, against which science needs to be on guard if she would arrive at the truth. Philosophy and theology are defined at length. We find the truth that saves only as we seek the full interpretation of fact (philosophy) and the full interpretation of faith (theology). The three standards of philosophy are inclusiveness, coherence, and objectivity; of religion—inclusiveness, coherence, and subjectivity. Philosophy and theology differ not only in function but in standards of truth and contents of coherence. The one is coherence of the actual, the here and now; the other coherence "goes beyond the present stage of process." (pp. 22, 124). This difference of coherence between philosophy and theology constitutes one of the major theses of the book. Ferré calls for a more effective philosophy of religion, one that will resist the temptation to make itself into a substitute for theology. The Circles of Science and Philosophy can be drawn. But no human compass can draw the Circle of Religion. It concerns itself with the "Most High," which cannot be measured. The interpretation of the existential ultimate is its chief busi-

ness. It includes knowledge but is not centered in it. "It is the highest delective event that most fully and most meaningfully lights up all else." (p. 214).

The reader will long for a more specific Christian commitment from the author. His treatment of religion is too general, too ambiguous. The terms "theology" and "religion" are sometimes used with disturbing confusion. Many a reader will proceed the more haltingly through this already complicated text because of the author's usage of uncommon theological terms such as, "selective actual," "selective ideal," "dynamic-self-verification," and "reflexive superspective." A more straightforward diction would strengthen the treatment. Mr. Ferré fails to make clear, furthermore, just what the "concrete content" should be to which his definition of religion would fit in. It will be agreed, nevertheless, that "Faith and Reason" is a most stimulating and challenging book. Its author for the most part tackles his problems squarely, without bias and without ignoring the rational difficulties involved. The next volume will be eagerly anticipated, but only by the initiated. Mr. Ferré has promised to deal more fully there with some of the issues that are raised in the book now being reviewed.

JAMES D. ROBERTSON

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*The Basis of Christian Faith*, by Floyd E. Hamilton. Third revised edition, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1946. 354 pages. \$2.50.

It speaks well for a book when popular demand makes imperative a third edition. The former editions (of 1927 and 1933) of *The Basis of Christian Faith* were designed to serve as a textbook at the college level in apologetic courses of a non-technical character. As such, they were designed to touch the field of Christian apologetics at all

of its principal points, avoiding on the one hand the expenditure of time on aspects of controversy which were not of contemporary concern, and on the other, a too-technical treatment of the material in hand which might discourage the undergraduate.

The present revision seeks the same objectives, and aims to supplement the former editions at the point of those areas affected by newer discoveries in atomic physics and genetics, and by newer trends in New Testament criticism. A review of such a volume must be undertaken in the spirit of sympathy with the needs of the undergraduate whose confidence in the essentials of the Christian message has been disturbed by a non-Christian system of education. Thus Professor Hamilton's work should be judged in the light of its effectiveness in the accomplishment of this task.

In an attempt to cover the entire field of apologetics, he has found it necessary to sacrifice thoroughness; and in so doing he has left some statements open to attack from the more critical type of reader. For example, notice his use of the term 'innate ideas' in speaking of time, space, existence, and cause. Perhaps a happier term might have been employed. Professor Hamilton is on more certain ground in his discussion of such topics as "The Reasonableness of Supernaturalism," "The Unity of the Bible," "Old Testament Criticism," "and "The Resurrection of Jesus Christ."

Beyond his specific handling of his factual material, our author is vigorous in his insistence that the opponents of historic Christianity are operating upon the basis of certain assumptions which are open to question. Welcome is his clear view of the rôle of initial premises in the erection of systems of thought. He may prejudice his case with some, in his emphasis (fundamentally correct in the opinion of some of us) upon the element of

*will* in belief. In other words, he has touched upon a sensitive point in the mind of the 'modern man' in his observation that "Men will ignore all possible solutions of a difficult passage that would remove contradictions, and seize upon the one possible interpretation that would produce a discrepancy, and then insist that the Bible *must* be wrong." (p. 273.)

On the whole, the volume is far from superficial; while it is pitched at the college level, it embodies observations which are basically significant, and which do not come amiss to conservatives in more advanced stages of preparation. A constructive conservative apologetic must have both method and direction; both of these are indicated in Professor Hamilton's book, the study of which ought to lay the foundation for more advanced study in the field.

HAROLD B. KUHN

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*Doom and Resurrection*, by Joseph L. Hromádka. Richmond, Virginia: Madrus House, 1945. 122 pages. \$2.00.

The late war brought to our shores a number of able thinkers, among whom was the author of *Doom and Resurrection*. Dr. Hromádka took refuge in Switzerland when the armies of Hitler invaded his native Czechoslovakia, and has been for five years professor in Princeton Theological Seminary. Out of his rich background as professor of theology in the University of Prague, he gives in brief compass a penetrating analysis of the causes of the decay of our modern culture. Representing in his own way the theological tradition known as The Dialectical Theology, our author seeks to show the relevance of the issues of sin, salvation, human destiny, eternal life, and God in an age of catastrophe — an age in which the loss of the sense of *the Truth* is a factor more to be

dreaded than the loss of economic security.

The volume is one of a series which has appeared in our generation, whose purpose is to protest the tendency in modern theology to "domesticate Christ and His majestic truth and to subordinate Him to our 'religious experience'." Its author pleads for a renewal of the consciousness of the "sacred line between good and evil, right and wrong, God and devil," and illustrates his point by reference to a group of prophets not well known to the average English reader.

Most writings of this type make primary reference to Kierkegaard; it is refreshing to find an appeal to Feodor Dostoyevski, who saw behind the impending breakdown of Europe's political and economic system to the dissolution of the invisible pillars of its moral order. Dr. Hromádka sees in Dostoyevski the literary expression of his own theme, namely *resurrection beginning only at the bottom of humanity's abyss*. In addition, he has rendered us a valuable service in introducing to the English reader the thought of Thomas Masaryk and his pupil, Emanuel Rádl.

Masaryk appears as the appreciative but critical eclectic, who read with patience Kant, Fichte, Comte, Hegel, Marx and Goethe, but finally found in Jesus "the synthesis of truth, responsible freedom, and love." Rádl, continuing his master's regard for the peoples of the Anglo-Saxon West, seems to have seen better than most in Britain and in America the factors which were precipitating the spiritual crisis in America: "The breakdown of the pre-war revivalism, the waning of Puritanism, the economic convulsions, religious relativism, and naturalistic trends in theology, the growing indifference toward missionary programs . . . ." (p. 81)

Chapter V, entitled "The Crisis and Theology" is enlightening as an expo-

sition, from a somewhat novel point of view, of the Dialectical Theology. Dr. Hromádka seems to find the cure for the sickness of our culture, not in the prescriptions of the Slavonic consultants (Dostoyevski, Masaryk and Rádl) but in Karl Barth, and especially the Barth of *The Epistle to the Romans* (second and subsequent editions). In this work the theologian of Basel is considered to have pointed to "the only unshakable rampart of thought and action, to the majestic authority of the revealed God, to the God of the Old and New Testaments." Our author apparently prefers *this* Barth to the Barth of the *Dogmatik*.

It is hoped that this review will serve to whet the appetite of many readers to study this keenly diagnostic work. Without agreeing with the concessiveness of Dr. Hromádka toward liberal historical criticism, the reader will find much to stimulate his thought with respect to the contemporary world scene. Some may be frightened by the author's dedication of the book to Henry A. Wallace, or distressed by its lack of an index. Most will wonder why it has had so little attention from reviewers.

HAROLD B. KUHN

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*David the King*, by Gladys Schmitt.  
New York: Dial Press, 1946. 631  
pages. \$3.00.

It is not surprising that the character of David, embodying in such large measure both the practical and the poetic, should hold an attraction for the literary mind no less than for the mind of the student of history. Once again the novelist has undertaken the task of delineating the son of Jesse, this time from a point of view which renders the book an object of no little concern to the Christian mind.

The broadest characterization of the volume is that it is a product of the "debunking" era — an era which some

of us fervently hoped might before now have come to an end. Specifically, Miss Schmitt has sought more earnestly to make a 'best seller' than to portray faithfully her character. She has majored upon the inconsistencies in David's life; one gains the impression that she has grossly overplayed the mystic strain in David, as a result of abnormal stress upon his rôle as a lyricist.

Turning to specific criticisms, this reviewer cannot avoid the conviction that the author has played fast and loose with the facts in the record of David's life. With a complete disregard for the spirit of Biblical antiquity, she presents the life of David as a series of peccadilloes, strung together with miscellaneous and relatively unimportant military and political activities. In this respect, the volume appears to have been written to appeal to the mentality which lifted Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath* to the place of a best-seller.

Lest it seem that the reviewer's comments are but the product of squeamishness, let it be said that Miss Schmitt has accepted, with a naïveté almost charming, the conclusions of liberal criticism of the Old Testament. Illustrative of this is her categorical attribution of the slaying of Goliath to Elhanan; any serious student of the Old Testament knows that even scholars of the more liberal schools of criticism recognize a problem at this point too difficult to be dismissed with gaiety. Again, she has accepted without criticism the view that Samuel was a frothing ecstatic; by making young David to note the "foam of prophecy" upon his mouth, she betrays a cavalier disregard for the active possibility that while there were doubtless wandering bands of ecstatics, Samuel may have been in the category of the articulate prophets. Again, she consistently employs the alternative *-baal* forms of the names of Ishbosheth and Mephibosheth as though no possible doubt

could exist with respect to the original naming of these men.

These samples are characteristic of the handling of the religion of Israel throughout the volume. Miss Schmitt obviously belittles the place of religion in the life of David, and makes his regard for Jehovah too largely a matter a matter of the tongue-in-the-cheek. Characteristically, David's view of God is *dynamic*; toward the close of his life, he is portrayed as a disappointed cynic, whose "God neither sees nor hears" or elsewhere as an erotic pantheist, who desires to be reunited with the Everlasting Being from Whom he has been absent for a little while, and Whom he has really been seeking in his amorous pursuits. This is, of course, an interpretation wholly unsupported by the records and reflects the general tendency of our author to lack seriousness in treating her character.

Of the many portrayals which evidence the author's opaqueness to religious values, one may be cited as an example, namely that of her treatment of David's repentance following the visit of Nathan. Here Miss Schmitt in her usual facile manner turns his attitude from that of penitence to one of self-justification, which is mingled with a desire to be done with the customary period of mourning. His supposed soliloquy completely subverts the element of repentance: "O God whom I do not know, I bitterly repent that I have murdered Uriah the Hittite. But I rejoice in the depth of my bowels that I have taken his wife to be my beloved. I have sinned grievously in Your (sic) sight. And yet I am a better man in the days of my sin than I was in the days of my guiltiness."

It goes without saying that the volume will serve to type the opinion of the uncritical reader with respect to David for some time to come. This review takes for granted that multitudes who never read *I* and *II Samuel* are

reading *David the King*. It is probable that long after the connoisseurs of literature, whose jaded appetites will receive a middle-sized thrill from the book, have forgotten it, the unthinking will accept as gospel Miss Schmitt's literary rehash of the more negative features of historical criticism. In the long run her distorted portrayal of David's religion will prove more damaging than the overemphasis upon the element of sex in the volume, done as

it is to emphasize the motif expressed by Cathal O'Toole on the book's jacket, that of evoking "the story of God's most magnificent sinner."

Books of this type, which overlay their materials, have a tendency to be ultimately self-defeating. Perhaps it will be so with *David the King*. Meanwhile Israel's Psalmist and his religion stand in the pillory.

HAROLD B. KUHN

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## *The Contributors' Column*

JULIAN C. MCPHEETERS, LL.D., is president of Asbury Theological Seminary, and well known in the field of Christian journalism, and as a religious leader. His page is a regular feature of this journal.

WALTHER EICHRODT, DR. THEOL., is professor of Old Testament in the University of Basel, Switzerland. Holder of several European degrees, he is well known for his writings in the field of Old Testament theology.

JAMES D. ROBERTSON (Ph.D., University of Cincinnati) is associate professor of practical theology in Asbury Theological Seminary and associate editor of this periodical.

ALVIN A. AHERN (Ph.D., New York University) is vice-president and professor of philosophy and religion in Greenville College (Illinois), and a contributor to several religious periodicals. His article on perfection was first read before the National Association of Biblical Instructors.

J. HAROLD GREENLEE (M.A., University of Kentucky) is secretary-treasurer of the Asbury Seminary Alumni Association. An alumnus of the Seminary, he is pursuing doctoral studies in Harvard University.

JOHN H. GERSTNER, Jr. (Ph.D., Harvard University) is an alumnus of Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, and pastor of the Second United Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He is already well known to the readers of this periodical, who will welcome his contribution to this issue.

C. ELVAN OLMSTEAD (Ph.D., Yale University) is assistant professor of Christian education in Asbury Theological Seminary, and associate editor of this journal.