

## BOOK REVIEWS

*An Introduction to the New Hermeneutic.* By Paul J. Achtemeier. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1969. 190 pp. including indices. \$6.50. Reviewed by George C. Fuller, First Presbyterian Church, Duluth, Minn.

Each phase of church history seems to be marked by controversy over some aspect of Christian thought. In recent decades a crucial question has been that of authority. Today attention is focused on the hermeneutical problem: "...whether it is possible to put an ancient text (the Bible) at the basis of an affirmation of faith designed to be understood, and taken seriously by modern man" (p. 13). Only "evangelicals" will see that today's debate with regard to hermeneutics is still largely a question of authority. Others will be proceeding on the basis of what they believe to be the resolution of the latter issue.

*An Introduction to the New Hermeneutic* is not a creative work. It is intended rather as an introduction to the hermeneutic principles of Gerald Ebeling and, more especially, Ernst Fuchs. The last half of the book is a lucid survey that may serve well, as the author hopes, "...for the time being at least, as an introduction to the thought of Ernst Fuchs" (p. 8). Earlier chapters in the book discuss background material: the earlier Heidegger (on Being and man), the later Heidegger (on truth, thought and language), Bultmann (including a brief review of critique, pp. 69-70) and an interesting synopsis of some data which display the great importance of language (pp. 71-83).

It is important to be familiar with the vocabulary of the "new hermeneutic." Achtemeier gives abbreviated attention to new views of many things: the Word of God (p. 96), myth ("the enemy of the Gospel," p. 99), faith ("a relation to the future, a relation which by its very nature changes the future," p. 104), Jesus' identity as God (p. 134), the resurrection (p. 140), the meaning of the cross (pp. 143-148), miracles (p. 139).

The last chapter ("Reflections on the New Hermeneutic") is a helpful summary of this summary. The critique which the reader is led to expect at this point is reserved for the last few pages. Achtemeier sees the "new hermeneutic" as being inconsistent in its views of man (and his faith) and language (and history). He also suggests that its proponents have not satisfactorily "come to terms with the New Testament witness to Christ risen from the dead" (p. 165).

*Faith and Reform: A Reinterpretation of Aggiornamento.* Edited by Jonathan Robinson. New York: Fordham University Press, 1969.

\$6.00. Reviewed by W. Stanford Reid, University of Guelph, Guelph, Ontario.

The four papers presented in this volume were delivered at Marianopolis College, Montreal, during the winter of 1968. The college, while not part of McGill University, is situated next door to it and with the Newman Club, acts as the Roman Catholic center for McGill students. The papers seek to present the relevancy of Roman Catholicism to the contemporary situation, while at the same time maintaining the historic doctrines of the church. They are thus endeavouring to set forth the positive side of *aggiornamento*.

In the first paper, the editor, following Cardinal Newman, insists that Catholicism is an historical religion, "social . . . dogmatic and intended for all ages." W. H. Irwin, C.S.B., in the second paper attacks the skepticism so widely manifest today towards the Bible, insisting that its doctrine of salvation is based on history, rather than myth. Furthermore, as interpreted authoritatively by the church, it is the only basis for true Christian unity. To the reviewer, the third paper, by James K. McConica, C.S.B., dealing with the Reformation and *aggiornamento*, is the most interesting. He points out the resemblances between the sixteenth and twentieth century situations, but believes that there is more hope for Roman Catholic survival now than there was then. Finally Dr. Timothy Suttor criticizes those who hold that *aggiornamento* means compromise with modern unbelief, since Roman Catholicism is as relevant today as it has ever been.

This is a very interesting volume, that seeks to do what most Protestant evangelicals wish to accomplish, i.e., show the relevance of the Christian faith for today. Of course, its forthright, uncompromising Roman Catholicism will not find acceptance among Protestants. On the other hand it does show that in some ways evangelicals are far closer to truly orthodox Roman Catholics than they are to the many secularized, demythologizing so-called Protestants. The book even indicates that both groups have some common ground upon which fruitful discussion could take place. If one wishes to know what orthodox Roman Catholics are thinking today, this volume will form a good introduction.

*The Church: From Pentecost to the Present.* By Carl S. Meyer. Chicago: Moody Press, 1969. 336 pp. Bibliographical notes and indexes. \$4.95.  
Reviewed by W. Stanford Reid, University of Guelph, Guelph, Ont.

To write a history of the Christian church from Pentecost to the present in a little over 300 pages is a difficult task! Nevertheless, Professor Meyer of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo. has sought to do exactly this. The result is an outline of the history of the church down to the present time without much interpretation or new insights into the past millenia of the church's story.

One might have expected from Professor Meyer fewer facts, but more synthesis, but the facts pour forth pell mell, very often without any attempt either to explain or relate them. Furthermore, at times the author tends to make broad statements which do not stand up under careful, detailed analysis. For instance, he speaks (p. 171) of Calvin envisaging a theocracy in Geneva. A careful examination of the sources would show that Calvin had no such idea. Some of his references to John Knox (p. 177) are also questionable. In the more modern period one searches in vain for references to men such as Abraham Kuyper, Herman Bavinck, Thomas Chalmers, J. Gresham Machen or Herman Dooyeweerd, who, although we may not always agree with them, have had a major influence on certain sections of the church over the past century and a half. Once he comes to the Reformation, Professor Meyer's Lutheran leanings show themselves quite clearly.

On the positive side, one can be thankful that this is a work that seeks to look at the history of the church from an evangelical point of view. The introduction that seeks to set forth in capsule form something of a philosophy of church history is interesting and should be useful for both the beginner and the more mature student. The book is written in a clear simple style which makes it easy to understand. For these reasons it should help meet the present need for a short compendium of the history of the Christian church.

*The Office of Apostle in the Early Church.* By Walter Schmithals. Nashville and New York: Abingdon Press, 1969. 288 pp. \$6.50. Reviewed by David Wells, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Ill.

In this newly translated book, Walter Schmithals of Marburg has investigated the nature, origin, and development of the apostolate. His conclusions are original and important.

The study begins with Paul's understanding of the apostolate's meaning. Schmithals assumes this starting point in the belief that the traditional concept of the Twelve did not belong to primitive Christianity. The emergence of this idea in the Synoptics must be dated after the development of the notion in Paul's mind. The author affirms that "for Paul and earliest Christianity, nothing is less self-evident than the apostleship of the so-called original apostles."

Who, then, were the earliest apostles? From Paul's letter it would appear that they were Andronicus, Junias, Barnabus, Silvanus, and perhaps Peter. It is interesting to note that these men were all Greek speaking Jews of the diaspora. None of them, Peter apart, had any connection with Jerusalem. The author concludes, therefore, that the apostolate was first native to Antioch rather than Jerusalem.

If Antioch was the first home of the primitive apostolate, rather than Jerusalem, then gnosticism was its inspiration rather than the teach-

ings of Jesus. In fact, this idea was alien to Christian thought in Jerusalem until it had been developed by Paul and transported back to the home of Christianity. It was then written into the gospel narratives.

Although Paul had borrowed the concept from the gnostics, he sought to transform it by his Christian orientation. The apostolic office no less than the apostolic message had the risen Christ for its source. He was the axis around which both the office and message revolved. Although the form of the apostolate was gnostic, its content derived exclusively from the Christic *apokalupsis*.

The importance of this book largely derives from the importance of the subject with which it deals. The question of the apostolate is intrinsically related to that of the canon, biblical authority, and, in one tradition at least, to that of ecclesiology. With regard to the last notion, for example, Vatican II asserted that there is a substantial identity between the apostolate and the episcopate, the former living on in the latter. (*Con. LG*, 18-21.) The Council's affirmation, built as it is on the traditional notion of the Twelve, is meaningless in the light of Schmithals' contention.

This book is characteristically German. It is systematic, thorough, erudite, and highly speculative. It assumes positions which may need little defense in Germany but which appear curiously esoteric outside this context. A case in point is the assumption that the Synoptic material relating to the Twelve is an importation into the history of the Jerusalem church of events and ideas that were in fact utterly alien to it. So important is this to Schmithals' whole contention that Anglo-Saxon readers could legitimately expect more justification for it than they are offered. For this reason, Schmithals' book will be far more convincing to those who already share his theological assumptions than to those who do not.

*In Search of Foundations: English Theology 1900-1920.* By Thomas A. Langford. Nashville and New York: Abingdon Press, 1969. 297 pp. plus bibliography and index. \$6.95. Reviewed by David Wells, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois.

"This book is an attempt to see theological ideas incarnate in their cultural context, an effort to understand religious intellectual sensibilities in living intercourse with their environment." In these words the author has stated his objective in discussing the significant intellectual developments which took place in England between 1900 and 1920.

Theology, the author asserts, is not an intramural activity. A reciprocity exists between the theologian and the cultural matrix of which he is a part. Theology not only creates the social milieu, it is created by it. Consequently, the social crisis which engulfed English society even before the first World War produced a theological echo in the form of

a crisis in faith. Change in society demanded a corresponding change in theology. Theologians, who were now obliged to find new foundations for the faith, began to explore the consequences of a theological methodology founded on Divine immanence; of a form of religious authority based on the religious consciousness rather than the historical continuum or the biblical documents; of a Christology, at once more psychological in its conception and more human in its result. Although there were distinctive contributions in this period, these were the new directions in which religious thought began to move.

Despite the author's broad interests—psychology, philosophy, theology, literature and economic theory—his own religious perspective has imposed a certain limitation on this study. For example, everything that the author has to say on Roman Catholic thought has been relegated to a thirteen page appendix. The author admits that Catholicism in this period was neither in communion with, nor a product of society. This would appear to be a violation of the author's fundamental assumption. It is doubtful whether this is a sufficient reason, though, for ignoring Catholic Modernism. This movement posed the most serious threat to the church since the days of the Reformation.

The author's religious perspective, however, has not adversely affected the main body of his work. Indeed, this book is characterized by careful analysis, temperate judgment and extensive documentation.

*The Purpose of the Biblical Genealogies with Special Reference to the Setting of the Genealogies of Jesus.* By Marshall D. Johnson. Cambridge: University Press, 1969. (Society for N.T. Studies Monograph Series, No. 8.) 310 pp. including 5 appendices and 13 pp. of bibliography. \$12.50. Reviewed by Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois.

"The present work," explains the author, "is intended to offer a synoptic view of the purpose of the biblical genealogies from the earliest occurrences of the form in the J-strand of the Pentateuch through the genealogies of Jesus in Matthew and Luke."

This volume is a veritable mine of information on the biblical genealogies. It will serve the scholarly community well to be reminded that the genealogies are closely attached to their contexts and the narratives of which they are a part. The author persuasively argues that there is a theology and a structure which binds genealogy and narratives together. M. Johnson has done a splendid job in arguing this case, especially in Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles; however, he has missed some beautiful examples of this phenomena, e.g., Exodus 6:14-27. This genealogy appears in an almost disruptive way and deliberately stops the flow of the action; a judgment which is not just a modern one, but appears to agree with the Biblical writer's view also (or on Johnson's critical views, the editor's view). The Biblical writer repeats almost verbatim vss. 10-12 in

vss. 28-30. To further mystify the reader, he begins with the genealogy of Reuben, Simeon and stops with the genealogy of Levi, concluding with "these are that Aaron and Moses to whom the Lord said..." The purpose of this genealogy is precisely the same as the narrative which it "interrupted": to remind Moses of the sovereignty of God's election in spite of the defects in one's ancestors or the lack of status by birth.

Evangelicals will be disappointed to see the author conclude that the chronological data of Israel's pre-exilic history are "artificial and speculative in character." Once again they will find contemporary scholars working on these problems without any references to the programmatic study offered by William Henry Green ("Primeval Chronology," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, April 1890, pp. 285-303). This is not to express a concern for absolute dating of events prior to Abraham, but it is a desire to champion the rights of the Biblical authors to be judged on the basis of their own truth-intentions rather than concluding that such schemes as mixed vertical and horizontal genealogies or the telescoping of a larger number of generations down to smaller number generations are "artificial" and evidence exaggerations, conflation or plain errors. (For fuller documentation and argumentation of these concerns, see: Kenneth Kitchen, *Ancient Orient and Old Testament*, Chicago: Inter-Varsity Press, 1966, pp. 36-41, and now Abraham Malamat, "King Lists of the Old Babylonian Period and Biblical Genealogies," *Journal of American Oriental Society*, 88 (1968), pp. 163-73).

The largest bulk of the book focuses on the two genealogies of Jesus in Matthew and Luke. While the discussion here is marred at times by the same methodological faults observed above (e.g., the study of the omission of the three kings in Matthew 1:8 and the two in 1:11 or the structure of three sets of fourteen), it is replete with many instructive views and conclusions. To my way of thinking, one of the most promising conclusions reached was that the whole of Matthew 1 is actually a commentary on the two titles applicable to Jesus at the time of his birth: Son of David and Son of God. Further, Matthew 1 may be patterned after the opening sentence of Mark's gospel. Thus, the genealogy in Matthew 1:1-17 would be the commentary on the title "Son of David" while the virgin birth pericope in 1:18-25 would be a commentary on the second half of the Markan title: "Son of God."

He discusses with fairness four approaches to the difficult problem of the harmonization of the genealogical accounts in Matthew and Luke even though we are dissatisfied with his conclusions. Neither genealogy comes from the earliest strata of the gospel tradition, but both fall into the category of Midrash and thus represent the "tendency towards historicification of non-historical materials" in favor of homiletical and hortatory functions.

It is with more than just a passing interest that we note that a scholar of the stature and methodology of J. Gresham Machen has been over-

looked (*Virgin Birth of Christ*. New York: Harper & Bros., 1930, chpts. especially VIII "The Relation Between the Narratives"). Until he is reckoned with a modern scholarship will remain the poorer for it.

We congratulate the author and publisher for their magnificent work, but plead for an interaction with the evangelical contributions to this problem in any future editions of this book.

*The Fathers of the Latin Church*. By Hans von Campenhausen. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969. 311 pp. plus chronological table, bibliography and index. Reviewed by David Wells, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois.

This book by the Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Heidelberg, first appeared in English at *Men Who Shaped the Western Church* and undoubtedly it deserves republication. Its chief merit is the engaging and provocative manner in which the giants of Latin orthodoxy are presented to the reader. Whereas a novice might find himself lulled to sleep if not stoned to death by the barrage of hard detail in Quasten, no such danger exists here. For this study was produced, not as a reference book, but rather as a means of facilitating a personal encounter between the reader and the seven fathers under discussion.

von Campenhausen has evidently found Lactantius and Boethius most congenial as personalities. The former, a gentle rhetorician, became a favorite of both Constantine and the fifteenth century humanists, while the latter embodied all that was humane and dignified in the pursuit of Truth. Ambrose and Cyprian were less congenial though, it must be said, still tolerable. Both men were politicians as much as they were theologians. In pursuing the former activity, though, they sometimes besmirched their own moral authority on which the latter activity was largely built.

Tertullian and Jerome, however, have severely tested the author's impartiality as a biographer. Tertullian emerges as the polished but nasty theologian whose "brilliant subtlety tempts one to take him more seriously [than he deserves] and [to] regard him as a deeper thinker than he really is." (p. 11). Jerome, on the other hand, emerges as a restless, shiftless, character whose brilliance was squandered in petty quarrels and whose enemies were "pursued" with fervent indignation and personal hatred." (p. 129).

In some respects the best of the seven studies is that on Augustine whose breadth, diversity and brilliance are depicted in a lucid and sympathetic way.

One interesting feature of this book is the absence of a single secondary source reference in the text. There is a bibliography at the end of the work, but this is predominantly German in flavor and rather scanty in the post-1940 period.

*The Revelation of St. John: An Introduction and Commentary.* By The Rev. Canon Leon Morris. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1969. 263 pp. \$4.50. Reviewed by M. C. Tenney, Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois.

The commentary on the Revelation, the twentieth volume of the Tyndale Commentaries, is one of the best in that series. Concise and compact, it crowds into a small space an extensive piece of interpretation. Although the Greek linguistic background is adequately represented, the notes are intelligible to anyone who understands plain English, and will be usable by serious readers of almost every level, from the professional scholar to the neophyte in Bible study.

The procedure of the author presents a verse-by-verse commentary following the outline of Revelation. Biblical imagery from the Old Testament is explained, and cross references to other parts of the New Testament afford linkage with the teaching of the Gospels and Epistles. The author endeavors to explain the symbolism by its Biblical connotations, without resort to wild speculation and fancies.

No specific viewpoint is espoused in the interpretation of Revelation. Various schools of interpretation, both literary and eschatological, are fairly described. The canonicity and authority of Revelation are defended, and the method of exposition is generally symbolical, though the author does not advocate a degree of "spiritualizations" that would render the Biblical text meaningless.

There is no attempt at a systematized eschatology: Dr. Morris does not commit himself to any one millennial scheme, but leaves an open option for any view. He does advocate the personal return of Christ rather than simply an evolutionary attainment of cosmic perfection. His claims are cautious, but his teaching is not indefinite. The size of the commentary precludes exhaustive treatment of the problems of Revelation, but it should prove useful to students who wish to be grounded in the factual content of the book, and to construct their own system of interpretation.

*A Place to Stand.* By Elton Trueblood. New York: Harper & Row, 1969. 128 pp. \$2.95. *The New Man for Our Time.* By Elton Trueblood. New York: Harper & Row, 1970. 126 pp. \$2.95. Reviewed by Ralph M. Ewbank, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois.

We have every reason to treat these two volumes together, for they could easily have been a single book. Both are built on the same three point outline. They should be purchased and read together, but in reverse of the order of publication. The second book provides a larger context for the first or the first is a lengthy treatment of one aspect of the second. The second book discusses the new man himself and the first examines the fundamentals of his theology.



*The New Man for Our Time* is the absolutely contemporary man (p. 9). He is a whole man, a totally integrated man. He is not the heretic who gives all his emphasis to a single aspect of the faith, but strives to present the total Gospel (pp. 9-10, 32-33). The three elements that are always kept together by such a man are (1) his compassionate service to his fellow human beings, (2) his personal relationship to God, and (3) his unflinching honesty about the intellectual aspects of his faith (p. 10, 34, *A Place to Stand*, p. 18).

Trueblood is troubled by the fragmentation that occurs when some care only about the reconstruction of society and others care about nothing else in this world except soul winning (pp. 17-24). He shows that neither Bonhoeffer (p. 23) nor Christ (pp. 26-27) can be used as support for such separation of elements that belong together. The new man is not a member of the cult of personal salvation or a social gospeler, but unites in himself the best elements of both positions.

The second chapter shifts to personal examples of wholeness. Brief mention is made of Rufus Jones, but the bulk of the material deals with the superb witness of John Woolman. The third and fourth chapters treat the two elements of reverence for God and service to men. The final chapter treats the intellectual aspects of faith in such a summary fashion that it makes us glad for the treatment in depth that is to be found in *A Place to Stand*.

*The New Man for Our Time* contains a very brief statement of Trueblood's argument from religious experience (pp. 61-62), expert advice on devotional reading (pp. 62-65), and arguments against subjective relativism (pp. 107-108), irrationalism (pp. 109-110), the neglect of theology (pp. 110-114), the idea that God is not personal (pp. 115-122), and the denial of miracle (pp. 123-126). At each point, of course, he defends his own objective, rational, supernaturalistic belief in a Personal God. He gives us, then, a brief and pithy statement of the major points he has sought to make throughout his long writing career.

The multitude of references to the works of J. B. Philipps and C. S. Lewis in *A Place to Stand* indicates a serious attempt to stand where these two have stood. The label "Evangelical Liberal" fits the scheme as well as any, particularly as it seems to be a self chosen label (p. 32, *The New Man for Our Time*, p. 30, 32).

The book supplies a rich mine of apologetics. Arguments we have seen before are given the kind of profound literary form for which Elton Trueblood is so justly famous. His apologetic begins where it should, with Christ (p. 35, 37-58). The treatment of the resurrection of our Lord is excellent (pp. 122-124), though Trueblood escapes the implications for believers (p. 127). The book provides one of the finest statements of the argument for our Lord's Deity (pp. 41-42), but Trueblood sidesteps that issue completely (p. 40). He begins with the claims of Christ, but

slides into the evidence of changed lives (p. 43). All the support we would ever need for belief in the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture is provided (p. 38, 59), but Trueblood seems unaware that he did this. The book provides, then, an arsenal for the apologist, but it leaves the Evangelical with the familiar feeling of sadness that comes because Trueblood has failed to follow through with the logic of his own argument and has been incapable of standing where a man who argues thus ought to stand.

*Reflection and Doubt in the Thought of Paul Tillich.* By Robert P. Scharlemann. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969. Reviewed by R. Allan Killen, Bryan College, Dayton, Tennessee.

There are two ways to approach the analysis of a theologian's system. The first is through a careful analysis of what he has written. Every argument he presents is weighed, every suggestion he makes is noted, every change in his ideas over the years is observed. This analysis can even extend to a study of the place that he occupies in the flow of theological thought. Dr. Scharlemann has accomplished the above in his book with regard to one phase of Paul Tillich's thought, namely his view of careful critical reflection and doubt, or what we might classify more generally as faith and doubt. Tillich says somewhere in his early writings that he finally came to the conclusion that both the man who believes and the man who doubts is justified. He considered this the most profound conclusion to which his philosophical and theological studies had led.

The above approach, careful and thorough though it may be, does not and cannot succeed. It has not in Scharlemann's book nor will it in the book written by an orthodox Christian. It cannot provide us with either a complete analysis or a successful answer. It can be compared to the examination given by the doctor who listens to all of the symptoms: headache, fast pulse, etc., but fails to locate the real cause and merely prescribes aspirin. He works with symptoms and never locates the real disease.

The second method acknowledges and uses all of the investigations made in the first. But it differs from it in that it asks, "In the light of this man's symptoms what is the trouble, the problem which must be faced and answered." It insists that nothing really effective can be done through an analysis which does not succeed in finding and setting forth the man's initial and basic problem. It points out that a man's theological system very often is the answer to his problem. Tillich's system, in particular, is an answer to a problem which he discovered in his student days, as he read Fichte and encountered a problem of the Greek Sceptics: The infinite cannot remain infinite if it exists beside something finite, and it cannot be the absolute if any other absolute exists beside it.

The answer formulated by the Christian must be on three levels.

1) What the man says contrasted with what the Bible teaches. 2) a statement of his assumptions and the way that they fail, as they lead to untenable consequences. 3) An answer to the problem itself.

Dr. Scharlemann has not set forth Tillich's problem nor explained the assumptions which he uses in his answer—that is, in his system. Rather he has started off with Tillich's assumptions and come to the conclusion Tillich is right when he says that both the man who accepts the Cross and the one who rejects it is justified, because this establishes the paradox of Christ. What he does not explain is that Tillich had to come to this conclusion, because, if the Cross were historically verifiable that would mean that it existed as an absolute beside God—and that in turn would destroy God! How then are believer and unbeliever justified in Tillich's system? They are united and justified on the basis of the fact that, though they disagree, they are both ultimately concerned!

Dr. Scharlemann assumes that Paul Tillich is entirely right in his assumption that the infinite is limited if it exists beside the finite, and that the existence of any absolute, moral or otherwise must limit and destroy God. He has not seen that the existence of one infinite does not necessarily destroy the existence of others. God is infinite with regard to each of his several attributes, and neither infinite time nor infinite space nor a finite world and man limit these infinities. The definition of infinite and of the absolute adopted by both Scharlemann and Tillich is simply mistaken. It leads into the labyrinth of contradictions found in both men's writings and thereby proves its incorrectness. Thus in brief we must point out the weakness of Tillich's assumptions.

What both men need finally is an answer to their common problem. This the biblical revelation of God, the world and man alone supplies. It provides a man made in the image and likeness of God. It explains the origin of evil in such a manner as to protect the absolute holiness of God. Tillich's system in contrast makes evil a necessary concomitant of God and of creation. It gives history that place and value which alone makes the Cross of Jesus Christ a true sacrifice for sin and thereby offers man a way of salvation.

Space does not permit that we go into the intricate and difficult arguments presented by Dr. Scharlemann. But an answer to the erroneous presuppositions removes both Tillich's system and Dr. Scharlemann's analysis and projection of the same.

*The Early Church.* By Henry Chadwick. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1969. 289 pp. \$6.95. Reviewed by John H. Gerstner, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh, Pa.

This is a fresh, interesting, learned but not ponderous recounting of the first five centuries of the church's history. Unlike most surveys it does not anchor itself in the pre-history of Judaism, hellenism and the

apostolic era. A knowledgeable person will recognize this work as knowledgeable but its scholarship is quite casual in the best British manner as befits a Regius Professor at Oxford. Understatement reaches the credibility point, however, when the Diocletian persecution is described as "unpleasant." While the Dead Sea Scrolls are put in place as of little significance for the comprehension of early Christianity one wonders about the neglect of Nag Hammadi.

Odd thing about this book: it is best adapted to mature scholars and general readers—not for incipient scholars such as seminarians. It is learned enough for the specialists to appreciate and the general reader to enjoy but the in-between person who needs an introduction to the sources along with the distilling of their essence is at a disadvantage.

There are a few details with which we disagree such as the supposition that the apostles erred in their teaching about the return of Christ and the relative neglect of the Nicene Council coupled with an extensive discussion of Julian; but, speaking comprehensively, this is a very fine work.

*The Cambridge History of the Bible* (Vol. 2). "The West from the Fathers to the Reformation" edited by G. W. H. Lampe, Cambridge. 1969. 565 pp. plus ix. Reviewed by Paul E. Leonard, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois.

Under the auspicious editorship of the Ely Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, Volume II of the projected trilogy in the Cambridge History of the Bible has now appeared.

This volume containing twenty individual contributions begins with a two chapter survey of the early textual traditions of both testaments. While this might appear an anomaly in a volume devoted to the history of the Bible from the time of Jerome, two justifications are set forth for it by the editor. First, since Volume 1, dealing with the Apostolic and Ante-Nicene era, was not yet published when this went to press it might be argued that there is the need to establish the background to the present study in this way. However, since Volume 1 has now appeared, only months after Volume 2, this factor was of minimal importance. The second reason, more permanently valid, is that readers primarily concerned with the medieval period will find such an introduction both useful and necessary to their appreciation of the latter developments.

The central portion of this study consists in a multi-faceted discussion of the exposition and exegesis of the Bible from an historical perspective. The different aspects considered include (a) patristic exegesis with its apologetic interests; (b) influence of the Bible as a basis of medieval European culture; (c) the liturgical embodiment of Scripture in forms of public worship; and (d) the influence of Jewish exegesis of the medieval period on the Christian interpretation of Scripture.

The final consideration of the book is in some respects an elaboration of (b) above. This includes an intriguing discussion of medieval manuscript illumination (with black and white plate illustrations at the rear of the volume), and an extensive survey of the history of translation of Scripture into the vernacular of the West.

Particularly stimulating is the concluding discussion of Erasmus and his contribution to the continuing task of communicating the Scriptures in the language of the people. Louis Bouyer, formerly Professor in the faculty of Theology of the Institut Catholique de Paris, underscores the importance and essential independence of Erasmus in the development of his principles of Biblical criticism. He points out that Erasmus' connection with the medieval tradition is tenuous at best but that the results of his labors were foundational for all further textual, exegetical and translation efforts till the late nineteenth century. Bouyer further points out that it is an exaggeration to maintain as some still do, that Erasmus used only the manuscript evidence of the Basle Dominicans as the basis for his edition of the Greek New Testament. Erasmus himself protested this accusation in his dedicatory letter to Leo X and it appears undeniable that at the very least he made use of notes gleaned from manuscripts examined while on an extended visit to England.

While this might be considered properly the subject of the third volume in this series, this reviewer still thought it a strange oversight that no mention is made of the influence of Erasmus on Luther who used Erasmus' critical edition as the basis for his own translation. The influence of this translation on that of Tyndale and thus on the continuing history of the English Wycliffe-King James Tradition is another important and well documented story.

Erasmus' further studies and critical editions of the major patristic commentaries were to anticipate the labors and productive insights of Lightfoot of Cambridge well over three centuries later. The recognition of the importance of this large body of early Christian literature as a primary source of textual data as well as for exegetical methodology was probably the most significant aspect of Erasmus' work. It led him on in the interpretation of Scripture to the point where it can now be said of him that he was far closer in spirit to the ancient patristic writers than to those of medieval times. . . . thus laying the ground work for that "return to the sources" spirit which characterized those Biblical expositors who were closest to the heart of the sixteenth century Reformation.

The work concludes with a fine annotated bibliography, structured according to the chapter divisions; a selection of illustrative plates, similarly annotated; and both subject and Biblical reference indices. This book is sure to take its place along with its two companion volumes as the standard reference work on the subject.

*By Oath Consigned.* By Meredith G. Kline. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968. 112 pp. plus indices. \$3.75.

*Covenant: The History of a Biblical Idea.* By Delbert R. Hillers. Baltimore: John Hopkins, 1969. 188 pp. plus xii and bibliography and index. \$1.95. Reviewed by Robert L. Alden, Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary, Denver, Colorado.

Genuinely new ideas are rare these days, but Meredith Kline has some. The ideas appeared in various articles of the *Westminster Theological Journal* and in his latest book, *By Oath Consigned*. It is something of a sequel to his earlier *Treaty of the Great King* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963) in which he introduced the reader to the whole matter of vassal treaties and showed the similarity between those of the Hittites and the book of Deuteronomy.

This new book develops the matter of the treaty format throughout the Bible and the ordeal or self-malediction accompanying the covenant-making or -renewing. Circumcision and baptism are the Old and New Testament ordeal rituals. The thesis is fully developed that malediction and benediction are present in both administrations. Christ's death is the archetype of circumcision, for there God "cut off" Himself in the person of His Son.

A whole chapter is given over to the baptism of John. This water ordeal and John's ministry in general are explained in the light of Jesus' parable of the vineyard (Matt. 21:33ff., *et al.*). Hence baptism is a symbolic act of death whereby the vassal curses himself in the subjunctive in view of the stipulations of the covenant. In the last chapter Kline deals with the administrations of these symbols and raises interesting questions about the mode and subjects of baptism.

Delbert Hillers' book is the latest in the John Hopkins "Seminars in the History of Ideas." The title and subtitle accurately describe this work. A simpler writing style marks his book as compared with Kline's. *Covenant* is a recitation of the progress of the idea with abundant reference to extra-biblical sources. Conservatives will be unhappy that Hillers rather uncritically accepts the later dating of Deuteronomy which is the very thing Kline argued against in his earlier book. Whereas Kline's recent book wrestles hard with the idea of covenant and its biblical-theological meaning in the New Testament, Hillers just touches these and Qumran materials briefly in the concluding chapter.

*Covenant* by Hillers is recommended as an introductory overview of the use of *covenant* in the Old Testament and extra-biblical sources. Kline's *By Oath Consigned* is recommended for those who want to delve deeply into the questions of covenant, circumcision, and baptism. Future writers on these subjects will have to reckon with his ideas or be charged with superficiality.

*The Future of Empirical Theology*. Ed. by Bernard E. Meland. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1969. Pp. x plus 387 and index. Reviewed by Clark H. Pinnock, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois.

This volume appears as the seventh in a series edited by Jerald C. Brauer in commemoration of the one hundredth anniversary of the University of Chicago's Divinity School. It is a highly significant exposition and evaluation of the experiential, liberal theology which has found a warm welcome in the Chicago theological community. The work is introduced by a historical survey (Professor Meland) which traces the flow of empirical theology from Shailer Matthews and Shirley Jackson Case, on through Edward S. Ames and Gerald B. Smith, and reaching a high point indeed in the work of Henry Nelson Wieman and Charles Hartshorne. The movement has been extended recently by such illustrious alumni as John B. Cobb, Daniel Day Williams, and Schubert M. Ogden. The volume is composed of essays by alumni of the Divinity School, several of whom are on the present faculty. (Meland, Ogden, Sittler, Gilkey).

What is "empirical theology"? It is a kind of theological thinking which acknowledges no final basis for its claims other than our common human experience. It grew out of the modern mentality which views this world as the proper locus of meaning and value. It is the attempt to interpret the Christian faith with the aid of resources to be found within the streams of pragmatic and process philosophy. Its Christology, in close relation to Schleiermacher, is naturalistic: Jesus as man realized in concrete actuality the potential possessed by all men. The theology aims to be "meaningful" at all costs, and freely cuts the suit to fit the cloth.

The attempt to form beliefs on the basis of evidence fairly considered is laudable. The Christian invitation asks for no arbitrary decision. But the "empirical theology" of the Chicago Divinity School is not empirical enough. First, dogmatic naturalism represents a materialistic metaphysic and not open empiricism at all. And, second, existential nuances have crept into the school. Both Loomer and Smith admit explicitly that all knowledge is relative to the knower who approaches the facts with value judgments. Those who hold to an existential epistemology should take care when they employ the adjective "empirical" to describe their thought. Indeed, our criticism can be quite immanent: if reality is in process, and if knowledge is relative, then any conclusions drawn by such a theology are twice relative and quite unreliable.

Yet, the volume can be heard as an invitation to evangelical scholars to construct a truly empirical theology: one which takes the *fact* of Christ with proper seriousness and locates its whole perspective in the objective data of special revelation. Only thus can be avoided the fideism of dialectical theology and naturalism of secular thought.

*C. S. Lewis, A Critical Essay.* By Peter Kreeft. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishers, 1969. 48 pp., including Selected Bibliography. 95c. Reviewed by Clyde S. Kilby, Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill.

This booklet is one of the series in Eerdmans' Contemporary Writers in Christian Perspective under the general editorship of Roderick Jellima. It was inevitable that C. S. Lewis be one of the selections. And it is one of the astonishments that Lewis should not only make a meaningful appeal to people all the way from little children to professors of philosophy but that the latter are often equally enthusiastic with the children about certain of Lewis's books. The author of this brief study, Peter Kreeft who received the Ph.D. from Fordham University and is now Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Boston College, praises Lewis's *The Last Battle*, the last in a series of seven children's stories, as one of the greatest of all children's books. As might be expected, Professor Kreeft, though finding certain faults with other of Lewis's books, holds a very high opinion of them as a whole.

Professor Kreeft's study seems to me worthy. He identifies the main religious, philosophical and practical elements of Lewis's thought and endeavors to take note of adverse as well as positive criticisms of Lewis. He regards Lewis as a test case, "a rock on which new philosophies may break, a Christianity against which the new Christianities must be fairly and unprejudicedly compared," and he points out the frequency with which ancient and "mere" Christianity has been the rock on which modern theories have broken themselves.

There are minor points all along on which I have doubts, such as Immanuel Kant being a major influence on Lewis or *Till We Have Faces* being primarily a historical novel, but I go along happily with Professor Kreeft's conviction that C. S. Lewis is a major and powerful exponent of genuine Christianity and a man to be reckoned with in our time.

*Luther, Erasmus and the Reformation. A Catholic-Protestant Reappraisal.* Edited by John C. Olin, James D. Smart, Robert E. McNally, S.J. New York: Fordham University Press, 1969. 150 pp. \$6.00. Reviewed by John H. Gerstner, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh, Pa.

This is a volume of brief essays delivered at a 1967 Protestant-Catholic symposium on the occasion of the 400th anniversary of Luther's 95 theses. Incidentally, more than one reference shows the present tendency to follow Iserloh in questioning whether the theses were ever posted on the Wittenberg Schlosskirche door as the Melancthonian tradition has it. In any case they were mailed to Albert of Brandenburg, it is granted.

The treatments cover a wide range of subjects—rather detailed—by competent scholars participating in the reappraisal of the Reformation in



the light of the new ecumenical dialogue. Miss Phillip's discussion of Erasmus is charmingly informative, Grimm's urbane reaction to the Reformation quite factual, McDonough's Catholic attempt to get at the real Luther interesting, and Dainton's analysis of the Catholic-Protestant authority question penetrating, as far as it went, which was not far enough.

All in all, as an effort at showing real rapprochement of the two churches the book is a failure. No essay analyzes the doctrinal issues of the Reformation with enough thoroughness to show the original difference much less any genuine subsequent rapprochement. Once again we have a dialogue between Roman Catholics, who are not thinking as Reformation Roman Catholics and Protestants who are not thinking as Reformation Protestants. Even Melancthon, I think, would spew out this "rapprochement" and I know Calvin would and I am certain Luther would and Bellarmin too!

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