

## BOOKS

*History of Religion in the United States*, by Henry K. Rowe. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$1.75

PROFESSOR ROWE has produced a very interesting work. He has had to consider a great revolution in religious principles and methods. His history starts at a time when everything depended on whether one was among the elect, and the notion that there was merit in good conduct was denounced as the most deadly error one could commit. Now nothing meets with more general approval than the precept—"Deeds, not creeds." Although formerly it was held that all things should be judged by the Bible, the doctrine is now spreading that the Bible itself should be judged for what it is worth to the moral purposes of our own times. And whereas it was formerly held that changes in ecclesiastical organization and worship were a restoration of primitive Christianity, the view seems now widely to prevail that improvements upon all historic Christianity are desirable and feasible.

The tendency of the times, as described by Professor Rowe, of the Newton Theological Institution, is to throw off dogma, to detach ethics from theology, to practise denominational comity and to find the unitive principle in religion in common regard for the brotherhood of man and joint action for the betterment of social conditions. The idea is that religion is purified by being disengaged from its traditional forms. Professor Rowe speaks eloquently of the process. He says—

"As men have thought and studied and experienced, they have discovered that spiritual religion consists first in a consciousness of God, not as an objective truth but as a subjective reality that enters into human life, a part of the warp and woof of human personality."

In what respect does this differ from religion as conceived by Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius? Does it not come to this, that religion is getting rid of Christianity?

Professor Rowe pays hearty tribute to the help that science is giving to the renovation of religion. While students of nature have been mastering its secrets, "students of religion have probed into the nature of God and man and have been learning the laws of spiritual force and the resources of divinity and humanity." But these students have not yet reached their goal. He admits that "Man does not yet comprehend God." He makes this modest disclaimer in bringing to a close his instructive survey of religious conditions and prospects.

Professor Rowe's references to the Catholic Church are kind and tolerant as a rule, but he thinks that the Church "suffers continually from its lack of kinship with the spirit of freedom and democracy." He offers no evidence in support of this statement which contradicts the opinion generally held by competent historians and deep students of political science. For instance, John Stuart Mill, who cannot be suspected of any bias toward Catholicism, ascribed to the influence of the Church the development of the free institutions characteristic of western civilization. It is a fact which must possess some significance that the only regions of the world where slavery was eradicated, where personal rights were recognized and protected by law, where authority was prevented from assuming despotic forms and constitutional government was created, were just those regions which experienced the training and discipline of the Catholic Church. So even if there were no better ground on which to rest the case than the law of evolution in which Professor Rowe confides, the Church must be admitted to have been an important factor in developments which

have exalted human dignity and enlarged human freedom. Moreover, there is no evidence that the Church is suffering from any of the causes mentioned. Any one who will use his eyes can observe that while the Protestant problem is to get the people to come to church, the Catholic problem is to accommodate the people who want to come.

The adherence of the Church to dogmatic religion, however disagreeable it may be to such states of sentiment as Professor Rowe describes, is just what any sound logician will concede to be in proper accord with her claims and principles. Dogma is nothing more or less than distinct and positive doctrine. Whether it be true or false, any doctrine that is clearly stated and firmly held is, by reason of that fact, a dogma. For instance, it is a dogma of the Mormon church that Joseph Smith received a genuine revelation, and it cannot abandon that dogma without abdicating its authority. It is only when one church is held to be as good as another, or when it is held that it doesn't matter what you believe so long as your heart is in the right place, that dogma becomes impertinent. Cardinal Newman stated the case with his usual logical precision when he wrote—"Dogmatism is a religion's profession of its own reality as contrasted with other systems." That is why the Catholic Church is and always will be dogmatic.

Professor Rowe appears to be as confident as was Rousseau in the natural goodness of human nature when no longer vexed by institutions of authority, and the present drift of popular sentiment seems to be in the main on his side. But religion detached from dogma is nothing more than sentiment, and morality detached from religion is nothing more than convention. Sentiment varies with moods; convention follows the fashion of the times. In reading Professor Rowe's glowing account of liberal tendencies we have failed to discover any safeguards against moral deterioration. Less optimistic observers think it is already quite manifest. Under every religious system the world has ever known moral education has been a matter of tradition. In the United States moral ideals have been formed by the Christian tradition which is now undergoing rapid modification. In view of the extent and character of that modification the moral consequences cannot but be tremendous.

HENRY J. FORD.

*Inheritance*, by Gertrude Callaghan. New York: Blue Faun Publications. \$1.50.

OUT of the vast welter of memories that seethe and surge through this neanderthalic cranium, rises the recollection of Gertrude Callaghan, a flapperish young person in blonde pig-tails—and now comes this volume of arresting impressions, *Inheritance*, a volume covering octaves in virility and variety and covering them without striking many wrong notes. The pig-tails have been done up if they haven't been bobbed, and we are here offered the mature reflections of one whose thoughts are:

"Live, vivid things of flaming hue,  
Elusive as a breath,  
Or timid, solitary, gray ones,  
Lying still as death."

To come of Irish blood on both sides, for centuries, and to be bathed from birth in the aura of aestheticism that hovers over all things Catholic, is to have, inevitably, a certain measure of poetic feeling and imagination. While the inheritance is common enough, it is less frequently claimed by those in the

direct line of succession than it is usurped by wastrel second sons, so to say, and squandered with prodigal and filthy fingers.

"Life prys into the most secluded places," says Miss Callaghan. Even so, must a reviewer. I shall begin with a digression, though the captious may say that this is an impossible feat in itself. By some unknown process of reasoning, many of these offsprings were first published in newspapers. Edith Thomas is the only other poet of promise I know of whose idiosyncrasy it is to use the great dailies as an outlet for her excess afflatus. This strange whim has little to recommend itself in the case of either lady.

An examination of these poems indicates that inheritance taxes have played sad havoc with the principal of Gertrude Callaghan's estate and that the administratrix is at fault for not having more profitably invested the remainder thereof.

Here is a poor little rich girl to whom has been bequeathed the heritage of a fine poetic sense, yet by virtue of those curious reticences, those ubiquitous inhibitions and suppressions in thought and action which spring from Irish Catholicism, though they are often the fruit of religiosity rather than religion, the vagaries of a voteen rather than the grand gestures of a devotee, she has swathed her Muse until it looks like the figure of an enclosed nun and is scarcely more communicative. Here is a sensitive spirit quivering with receptive antennae, to whom Life has been permitted to bear no significant message. What to do? Fall back on "the poor step-dame," of course, like all others in a similar impasse, but of this interesting phase of Miss Callaghan's work, more anon.

Gertrude Callaghan reminds me of a Trappist cook I know, who can speak twelve languages, yet voluntarily remains mute. She succinctly states her dilemma thus:

"My father was a pious man; my mother was a saint;  
I only knew the grayness of their somber tinted day;  
So when you came in flaming robe and fearless unrestraint,  
How could I but in startled wonder send you far away?"

For I was very young that time; today I'm human wise;  
Your flaming robe still haunts me till I can not bear the gray;  
Why have I then my father's heart and why my mother's eyes—  
Oh, it was they and never I that sent you far away!"

So it is to be one of those who "have beads for prayer" and not merely one of those who have them "to grace the throat." "Human wise," but not "mortal wise," an interesting distinction, she stands a little apart, a female de Coverley, reporting that feast at which she has never been a guest. She is like her Comedian, who

" . . . plays his part  
Though his heart is sore."

Brought up on fairy tales, which, as she tells us, "only hurt some day," she now knows that her "candle light is only Dreams." As she intimates in *Since Then*, she has learned that it is who walks beside that leads the road to Arcady and is apprised, as was Goethe (who never found it) that ordinary human happiness lies in the home. Wherefore, this advertisement, Wanted:

"A tiny house, no more, no less,  
With only room for happiness;  
Where kindness shades the searching light  
And happy hearts hold court each night;

Where doors are barred from sorrow's din  
And only love may dwell therein.  
They tell me, Life, you've just a few  
Such houses—could I have one, too?"

Poems are like babies; they need a lot of nursing. It would have enhanced Miss Callaghan's reputation if she "sat up with" some of the items in this book a while longer. A poet can demonstrate precise, sober workmanship without being an exponent of the supersubtle nuance nor an impressionistic vulgarian.

The test of an artist is that he or she create an illusion. Its fundamental quality is convincingness. It must wear the same air of inevitableness that we perceive in objects of nature, like flowers and waterfalls and children at play. They are real things manifesting their reality. And that is what the artist's material must be. To attempt the portrayal of that which, to the artist, does not exist, is to court failure. Gertrude Callaghan is, fortunately, acquainted with most of her limitations and confines her efforts to rebuilding that reality of which she has empirical knowledge. There is nothing precious, elaborate, brilliant or obscure about her verses. They are the harvest of a lucid and sensitive mind and not a few of her lines carry strength and conviction and therefore beauty.

Gertrude Callaghan is, above all, Nature's confidante. "The poor step-dame" has been accurately observed in many moods and is here duly reported in verse that is frequently stimulating and in the main, technically sound. Like the heroine of *Escape*,

"She loves the silent places of the moon,  
The deep and quiet solitude of stars.  
When sighing winds, all weary, cease to croon  
And night unlocks the world from earthly bars."

She invokes the March winds, but April is her favorite month. She sings of those blithe days "when the springtime blossoms scent the April rain," and tells of one who "in April's arms had died of ecstasy."

In *Cedars*, Miss Callaghan celebrates the amours of two old trees that stand, "Darby and Joan-like," in her garden. In spite of its indubitable defects, the poem is a good venture and one that lingers in the mind by reason of its quaint charm of illusiveness.

"And often at night when the wind's song charms  
The cedars will sway in each other's arms.

Or a wandering moonbeam will leave a kiss—  
But only at night do they act like this.

I wonder at times what the end will be,—  
Or will they live on through Eternity?

And I almost can find in my heart to pray  
That the end come to both on the selfsame day."

Joyce Kilmer rose to his first fame with a little poem about trees that was not much better, in some ways, than the one under discussion. Kilmer, like the finished craftsman he was, gave his poem a graceful start and saw to it that it ended in due time, with a smash. There was a crescendo throughout that poem which is lacking in *Cedars*.

On seeing the attractive format of this volume, one smacks

one's chops in anticipation of a feast, and when all is said, after tackling the meal provided therein, one can utter a grace without cant. One recalls other more satisfying banquets, washed down by more sparkling wines, but those who possess their souls in patience during the dreary waits between some of the courses, when the music fails to soothe, will be rewarded with delicious morsels properly done, and, for all you know, "there's pippins and cheese to come."

HUGH ALLEN.

*The World's Debt to the Catholic Church*, by James J. Walsh. Boston: Stratford Company. \$2.00

AT the close of a recent discussion on some religious event in history, the audience, that is the Catholic part at least, was very much surprised to hear the Vatican described as a centre entrenched and alien, to protect and spread its own private interests in a world that seemed called upon for centuries to resist its aggression. The speaker was apparently without the slightest realization that the Vatican, instead of being a foreign element, is and has been from its beginning nothing more than the head service station of the entire world. Its popes, cardinals, bishops and priests have been banded together under Canon Law to protect and promote not their own interests alone but to proceed from the start with the Christianizing and civilizing of the whole race of mankind.

Such a book as that of the learned Dr. James J. Walsh must be particularly useful to persons of hostile pre-possessions against the organized Catholic Church. Those who have studied history in its broader light will naturally recognize the services performed by our early religious founders, as well in ancient Asia, Greece, Rome and Africa as in the new settlements and wildernesses of the Americas and Australia.

In architecture alone the Church has left a lasting public documentation of her services to human society such as can not be overlooked. The domes and spires that lift across the expanse of the world, the quality of ancient carving and proportion that today can not be matched or equalled in any way, should be enough to silence critics, whatever kind of unbelievers they happen to be. Dr. Walsh gracefully conducts his reader from the dome of Santa Sophia, the tombs and basilicas of Ravenna, the Venetian San Marco, through the vaulted Romanesque and the pointed foliage of the Gothic. Catholic scholars are at their ease and at home among the greatest glories of architecture.

A visit to the Scandinavian countries, where there is a definite sense of national architecture, as in Norway, Denmark and Sweden, will convince any observer that with the faith of Rome, the culture of the Vatican, there passed across these countries a breath of art that was definitely suspended in the reign of Gustaf-Vasa. Nobody studying the architecture of the foundation of St. Brigitta of Vadstena or the series of exquisite ruins at Visby on the Island of Gotland can have the slightest doubt that here was another of the many activities and services of that "enclosed" organization that some modern authors would set out as "against the world."

To continue the contrast, one has merely to compare the art galleries of the Christian world, whose greatest masterpieces are invariably Catholic, with the collections of oriental art, from China, Japan, India and the Moslem countries. There can hardly be the shadow of an argument here. In sculpture the names of Leonardo da Vinci, the Della Robbias, Mino da Fiesole, Michelangelo, Donatello, and Albrecht

Durer, spell the names of Roman—or Vatican—culture for the most purblind to recognize.

In the arts and crafts, the achievement has been equally brilliant, not to mention the art of illumination and miniature-painting which owe their very existence to the missals and scriptures of the early monks, nor the very locks and hinges of the monasteries, the pots and pans of their kitchens, the windows, furniture and ceilings and pavements and staircases, now so industriously copied by the modern artist—mostly without ascription.

The beginnings of our modern music come from the halls of the Vatican. St. Ambrose's school of song dates from Milan of the fourth century. The early history of Gregorian music is entirely papal. Saldoni declares that all Spanish music prior to the sixteenth century was ecclesiastical as was the great floriation from Josquin Despres, Orlando di Lasso to Palestrina of the Vatican Chapel, the important services of St. Philip Neri in organizing the Oratorio, and the splendid sacred interpretations of Mozart, Rossini and Gounod. We hear much of the hymnology of the separated churches of the north, but while we may acknowledge the loveliness of many of their hymns, we need not recognize them as rivals in musical fame with the work of the Catholic masters.

Dr. James J. Walsh does not pause in his elaboration of the list of services preformed for humanity by the parent Church. It is easy to pass over the whole literary contribution of Catholics and discuss their activities in education, from the Ratio Studiorum to the elementary system of the Christian Brothers. In feminine education we are reminded of the vast part played by the conventual schools; their share in the rearing of children, in the protection of young women in hospices and pensions, their mothering of the aged and infirm, to an extent that it may be said that never were the poor of Europe so desolate as in the centuries that followed the destruction of these establishments in the Reformation days.

Science has always been a well-discussed chapter among the modern historians possessed by the desire to show the Church as an obstacle. Dr. Walsh's new book handles this question as ably as might be expected from the author of earlier works on the Catholic scientists and healers of the past and present. With the name of Pasteur, the case may be closed for the defense.

In the face of the helpless floundering of modern philosophers, with the reviving acknowledgements by our modern universities of the place of scholasticism in a solid curriculum, and with a study of the inner life of Catholics in his chapter on "Helping the Helpless," Dr. Walsh completes his exposition of Catholic "love of God and of one's fellow man."

His quotation of Gerhart Hauptmann, the dramatic poet and winner of the Nobel Prize, must therefore seem particularly significant.

As a Protestant I have often had to regret that we purchased our freedom of conscience, our individual liberty at entirely too high a price. In order to make room for the small, mean little plant of personal life, we destroyed a whole garden of fancy and hewed down a virgin forest of aesthetic ideas. We went even so far in the insanity of our weakness as to throw out of the garden of our souls the fruitful soil that had been accumulating for thousands of years or else we plowed it under sterile clay.

THOMAS WALSH.